

TIMELINE OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS, 1940-45¹

1940

Bellanova publishes his 'synthetic novel' *Picchiata nell'amore*.

Jan Marinetti in poor health, suffering with a duodenal ulcer that had first caused him problems the previous September. The gastroenterostomy he undergoes in March incurs medical bills of L. 25,000 which are paid by the regime.

2 Feb Marinetti officially notified of Mussolini's decision to allocate L. 2,000,000 for the contribution of Futurist artists to E 42.

6 Apr VII Milan Triennale opens, displaying interior design projects by Andreoni and Prampolini, as well as graphics by Munari and Ricas (Riccardo Castagnedi).

9 Apr Germany invades Denmark and Norway.

11 Apr Marinetti announced as a member of the jury for the second of Farinacci's Nazi-inspired Cremona Prize exhibitions. Works by Angelucci, Di Bosso, Dottori, Forlin and Zen – tackling the obligatory subject of 'The Battle for Grain' – are accepted for the show, which opens in May.

9 May *First Triennial Exhibition of Italy's Overseas Territories* opens in Naples. Several leading Futurists participate – most notably Prampolini, with large-scale

¹ Bold text denotes political developments; normal text denotes Futurist events. This chronology has been drawn up on the basis of information contained in a number of sources, principally the biographies of Marinetti by Agnese, Viola and Guerri, Crispolti's *Nuovi Archivi del Futurismo*, Cammarota's bibliographical compendia, and studies of modern Italian history by Clark, Deakin and Mack Smith.

experimental installations for the Electronics pavilion, and a mural in ceramic created in collaboration with Tullio d'Albisola, among other projects.

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| 10 May | <p>Germany invades the Low Countries and France.</p> <p>Churchill appointed Prime Minister of Britain.</p> |
| 18 May | <p>XXII Venice Biennale opens. The Futurist section, in rooms 58-60 of the Italian pavilion, focuses on the theme of the 'simultaneous aeroportrait'. It also includes a well-received solo exhibition of 14 aeropaintings by Crali, as well as abstract works by Radice and Rho.</p> |
| 10 Jun | <p>Mussolini abandons his 'non-belligerent' stance and Italy enters the Second World War. Shortly thereafter, Marinetti writes to members of his movement encouraging them to enlist.</p> |
| 11 Jun | <p>The Allied air campaign against Italy begins with the bombing of Turin.</p> |
| 28 Jun | <p>Italo Balbo's aeroplane shot down by friendly fire in Tobruk.</p> |
| 4 Aug | <p>Italy invades British and French Somaliland.</p> |
| 4 Sep | <p>In Monselice, the 'Savarè' Futurist Group inaugurates its seventh exhibition, the first of its shows to be organised following Mussolini's declaration of war, and the first to carry a reference to war art in its title (<i>aeropittura guerriera</i>). The exhibition comprises around 50 works by Fasullo and Forlin. The group's eighth, ninth and tenth shows will be held in Padua, Ferrara and Milan in October and December 1940, and February 1941, respectively.</p> |
| 7 Sep | <p>The Blitz begins.</p> |
| 14 Sep | <p>Italy invades Egypt.</p> |
| 20 Sep | <p>Marinetti publishes his 'New Aesthetic of War'.</p> |

- 27 Sep** **Italy signs the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Japan.**
- 10 Oct Forlín organises an open-air exhibition on the occasion of Mussolini's visit to Monselice. A large-scale version of his *Synthetic Portrait of the Duce* (1936), depicting Mussolini seated on horseback and swinging a fist towards the viewer, causes the subject to exclaim '*Ecco il Duce futurista*' ('Here is the Futurist Duce'), a remark subsequently printed beneath all reproductions of the work.
- 28 Oct** **Italy invades Greece.**
- 11 Nov** **British forces attack the Italian naval fleet at Taranto, inflicting heavy losses.**
- 4 Dec Marinetti publishes 'Aeropainting of Bombardments'.

1941

Pattarozzi publishes *Carlinga di aeropoeti futuristi di guerra*, an anthology of Futurist poetry on war-related themes.

- Jan Benedetto is captured following the Italian defeat at Bardia (Libya). Interned in various POW camps, he is eventually transferred to the British-run camp in Yol, India, being repatriated only in 1947. The artist's wartime experiences are recounted in a 1968 memoir titled *Racconti del tempo perduto* (Tales of Lost Time).
- 22 Jan Marinetti, Bellanova, Scrivo and Luigi Bonelli interrupt a performance of Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* at Rome's Teatro Argentina, accusing the author of plagiarising Futurist theory, and protesting against the *esterofilia* of the theatre in promoting his work above that of the Futurists.

- Feb Marinetti begins to request expenses of L. 2000 for delivering lectures.
- A large retrospective *Exhibition by the Painter Enrico Prampolini* opens at the Galleria di Roma, focusing on the artist's 'cosmic' aeropaintings dating from 1928 onward.
- Feb-Apr Italy loses her East African empire as first Eritrea, then Somalia and finally Ethiopia falls to the Allies.**
- Mar Tato's *Solo Exhibition of Futurist Aeropaintings of War* opens at the Air Ministry's Dopolavoro premises in Rome. The show comprises 70 aggressive, dramatic and expressionistic *aeropitture di bombardamenti* in addition to 16 satirical images.
- 14 Mar An exhibition of *Futurist Aeropaintings of War by Andreoni* opens at the Casa d'Artisti, Milan.
- Apr Having been advised of Marinetti's financial hardships by Manlio Morgagni, President of the authoritative Stefani press agency, Mussolini authorises a monthly payment to the Futurist leader of L. 15,000.² The payments continue until the collapse of the regime in the summer of 1943.
- 6 Apr Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece.**
- 9 Apr Pattarozzi publishes his diatribe *Inghilterra fogna di passatismo*.
- 29 Apr Andreoni begins military service in Croatia, which continues until 18 June.
- May Opening of the *III Exhibition of the National Fascist Fine Arts Union* in Milan. The Futurist section comprises the work of 24 artists, including abstract painters such as Soldati, Badiali and Licini.
- Civello publishes his poetic 'glorification of Italian aviation', *Aria Madre*.

² Equivalent to approximately €8000 in 2009 according to Guerri, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., p. 262.

- 8 May The reprint of Marinetti's 'handbook' *How to Seduce Women* is sequestered by the Ministry of Popular Culture.
- 24 May *A Solo Exhibition by Renato Di Bosso. Sculptor – Painter – Xylographer* opens at the Casa d'Artisti, Milan, comprising sculptures, drawings, aeropaintings and woodcuts on a range of subjects. Di Bosso's manifesto of 'aerocylography' is published in the accompanying catalogue.
- 14 Jun Constitution of the Gruppo Primordiali Futuristi, formalising an existing spirit of collaboration between Futurist artists and a number of abstract painters and Rationalist architects from the Como region, including Badiali, Radice, Rho and Cesare Cattaneo. The group's first manifesto is published following day. Marinetti subsequently insists its leader, Ciliberti, rename the group in honour of the Futurist architect Antonio Sant'Elia.
- 22 Jun Germany launches its invasion of the Soviet Union, Operation Barbarossa.**
- 19 Aug Andreoni begins military service in the Soviet Union.
- Oct-Dec Problems that first came to light in 1939 between Marinetti and Italy's public service broadcaster EIAR, over the former's radio broadcasts, flare up once again. Marinetti had taken little note of requests from Dino Alfieri's Ministry of Popular Culture to make his discourses less 'eccentric' or obscure. However, in response to renewed complaints from listeners Alfieri's successor, Pavolini, obtains the approval of Mussolini to suspend the Futurist leader's broadcasts.
- 2 Oct De Concini publishes his volume of *Aeropoesie futuriste di bombardamenti*.
- 12 Oct The Agenzia A. L. A. press agency announces Marinetti's establishment of a gallery of Futurist art in his apartment at Piazza Adriana 11, Rome. Comprising 190 works and focusing on aeropainting, it also includes an historical section 'dedicated to works by the masters of pictorial Futurism: Boccioni, Sant'Elia, Balla, Russolo, Severini, Carrà, Soffici, Funi, Sironi'.

- 10 Nov At a Futurist evening in Padua, Marinetti intervenes to prevent the young poet Serbo being attacked by local Fascists left unimpressed by his performance.
- 7 Dec Japan declares war on the United States and attacks Pearl Harbor.**
- 11 Dec Italy and Germany declare war on the United States.**
- 12 Dec Crali is officially invited to produce work for the Air Force pavilion at the 1942 Venice Biennale.
- 14 Dec An exhibition by the Gruppo Primordiali Futuristi Sant'Elia opens at the Galleria Ettore Mascioni, Milan.

1942

- 24 Feb Futurist *serata* in Bologna; Marinetti is heckled by a member of the public, who shouts from the back of the hall: 'Instead of talking, you would do better to depart for the Front!'
- Mar An exhibition of Futurist aeropaintings of war – opened by the Vice President of the PNF, Carlo Ravasio – is held at Palazzo Braschi, Rome.
- May The design journal *Graphicus* publishes the manifesto 'The Art of Wartime and Post-war Typography'.
- 6 May Benedetta writes to Morgagni seeking reassurance as to the propriety of the regime's continued financial support of her husband and his movement during wartime. Morgagni duly enquires with Mussolini, who personally authorises Marinetti's monthly payments to continue.

- 15 May Marinetti publishes his extended aeropoem *Canto eroi e macchine della guerra mussoliniana*.
- 17 May Andreoni appointed war artist at the Eastern Front by the Propaganda Department of the War Ministry.
- 23 May Work completed on Prampolini's mosaic for E 42, on the theme of *The Corporations*.
- 27 May Marinetti opens the *First National Exhibition of Photoplastics of War* in Macerata.
- Jun Di Bosso and Ambrosi publish their broadside against still life painting, *Eroi macchine ali contro nature morte*.
- Work completed on Depero's mosaic for E 42, on the theme of *The Professions and the Arts*.
- 21 Jun XXIII Venice Biennale opens. The Futurist section – housed in the vacant Belgian pavilion – comprises 190 works, many of which address political or military themes; a significant number are also abstract in nature. A further 27 pieces are displayed in the Air Force pavilion, making this by far the largest selection of Futurist art ever assembled at a Biennale. In his introduction to the catalogue the institution's Secretary General, Antonio Maraini, rails against the detachment from current events characterising much contemporary art, thereby echoing the views of both the regime and the Futurists themselves.
- 23 Jun In Monselice, Marinetti opens the Futurist Centre for the Distribution of Aeropoetry of War to the Soldiers of Landseasky.
- Jul **Constitution of the 8th Italian Army (the Italian Army in Russia, or ARMIR) which replaces the earlier Expeditionary Corps, or CSIR.**

Marinetti and Crali sign their manifesto 'Plastic Illusionism of War and Perfecting the Earth'.

- 23 Jul Death of Bruno Tano, the leader of Macerata's 'Boccioni' Futurist group.

- 27 Jul Having undergone an operation on his hernia, Marinetti departs for voluntary military service in the Soviet Union from Verona's Porta Nuova train station, finally arriving at his destination – Kantemirovka, near the River Don – on 16 August. The Futurist leader serves with the rank of Primo Seniore (equivalent to Lieutenant Colonel) in the '23 Marzo' division of the Militia.

- 12 Sep Marinetti takes part in a successful military operation to recapture the village of Sviniuka from Soviet troops.

- 24 Oct Luigi Federzoni, President of the Royal Academy, writes to Benedetta complaining about the attacks launched against certain of the Academy's members by Pattarozzi's newspaper *Mediterraneo Futurista*. He expresses concern over the fact that Marinetti is widely considered to be behind the attacks, given his stated position as the publication's *Primo Collaboratore*. The matter is referred simultaneously by Federzoni to Pavolini, who suspends Pattarozzi's newspaper.

- Nov Examples of Andreoni's war art are included in an exhibition that tours between Berlin, Munich and Vienna until January 1943.

- 5 Nov Marinetti leaves the Eastern Front and begins his journey back to Italy; around this time, Forlin departs for voluntary service in the Soviet Union.

- 3 Dec Forlin writes to Serbo from the Eastern Front; he is destined never to return from the USSR, although the precise date of his death remains unknown.

- 20 Dec An exhibition of *6 Futurist Aeropainters of War* opens at Rome's Galleria San Marco, displaying works by Ambrosi, Crali, Di Bosso, Dottori, Prampolini and Tato.

1943

- 11 Jan Marinetti delivers what is to be his final lecture at the Royal Academy, concerning his recent experiences in the Soviet Union. In it he reaffirms his long-standing faith in *inequalismo* and scorn for Communism's levelling impulses, which he presents as being mirrored in the unrelieved monotony of the Russian landscape and the 'identical' nature of its people, thereby reflecting the tone and themes of official propaganda, if not the sentiments of many of his fellow Italian soldiers. In the audience is the German Ambassador, Hans von Mackensen, and Bottai, who notes in his diary how Marinetti seems a shadow of his former self.
- 16 Jan Marinetti is twice forced to cut short a lecture at Brescia's Teatro Grande due to ill health.
- Feb In an article for the journal *Autori e Scrittori*, Somenzi breathlessly relates the news that the Duce has officially sanctioned the founding of a National Gallery of Futurist Art and Aeropainting of War, to be established in Rome following the war. The same article also notes the establishment of two new prizes – one for Futurist painting, another for Futurist architecture. Named in honour of Umberto Boccioni and Antonio Sant'Elia, respectively, these are to be conferred by the Royal Academy. (That summer, Prampolini wins the Boccioni Prize; the Sant'Elia Prize does not appear to have been conferred.)
- 2 Feb German forces surrender at Stalingrad.**
- 5 Feb Dramatic reshuffle of the Fascist hierarchy: Grandi, Ciano and Bottai lose their positions as heads of the ministries responsible for justice, foreign affairs and education, respectively.**

- 28 Feb Depero publishes his collection of theoretical essays and propaganda *A passo romano*.
- Mar Workers strike in the factories of northern Italy.**
- Apr Formation of the United Freedom Front under former Liberal prime minister Ivanoe Bonomi, drawing most of the main anti-Fascist groups together. Following the armistice, it will metamorphose into the Committee of National Liberation.**
- 9 Apr The exhibition *Documentary of the Russian War by the Painters Cesare Andreoni and Carlo Anselmi* opens at Bergamo's Rotonda dei Mille gallery.
- May Final defeat of Axis forces in North Africa.**
- Peruzzi's studio in Livorno is destroyed in the course of an aerial bombardment and many works from his Futurist period are lost.
- 8 May The first 'Dynamism of War Poetry' evening, organised by the National Union of Authors and Writers, is held in Rome; Franca Maria Corneli declaims her *Futurist Aeropoem of Umbria*.
- 11 May Peruzzi is captured in Tunisia and subsequently imprisoned in Missouri's Weingarten POW camp for the remainder of the war. There, Peruzzi is allowed to paint and organise exhibitions.
- 16 May IV Quadriennale opens in Rome – the final occasion on which the Futurist group will exhibit together. The selection of works on display closely resembles that shown at the Biennale the previous year, albeit on a smaller scale.
- 19 May Marinetti is informed of Forlín's death at the Eastern Front.

Jun	An <i>Exhibition of Aeronautical Art</i> opens at the Galleria di Roma. A wide range of painters participate in this display of war art, which resembles the exhibition mounted in the Air Force pavilion at the previous year's Biennale.
9-10 Jul	Allied troops land in Sicily.
19 Jul	Meeting between Mussolini and Hitler at Feltre.
	Heavy Allied bombardment of Rome.
	Terragni collapses and dies in Como, shortly after returning from two years of military service in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.
24 Jul	Meeting of the Fascist Grand Council. A de facto vote of no confidence in Mussolini is passed and he is arrested the following day at the king's residence. Marshal Pietro Badoglio is appointed Prime Minister and declares: 'The war continues'.
26 Jul	Monachesi leads the liberation of political prisoners from Rome's Regina Coeli prison.
31 Jul	IV Quadriennale closes.
Aug	Bellanova publishes <i>Bombardata Napoli canta</i> , the final work to be published by Edizioni Futuriste di 'Poesia'.
21 Aug	EIAR terminates its association with Marinetti.
Sep	Andreoni's Milanese apartment – and a number of his works – are destroyed by aerial bombardment.
3 Sep	Military armistice signed in secret at Cassibile, Sicily.

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| 8 Sep | Armistice announced by Eisenhower. Over the following three days, German forces occupy Rome. |
| 9 Sep | King Vittorio Emanuele III and Badoglio flee Rome and head to Brindisi, leaving the Italian army in disarray. |
| | Operation Avalanche begins, the main Allied invasion of Italy at Salerno. |
| 12 Sep | Mussolini rescued by Nazi forces in a daring raid on his mountain-top prison in the Abruzzo. |
| | Believing Mussolini to be in Vienna, Marinetti is one of a small group that considers the possibility of sending a deputation to their fallen leader with the intention of dissuading him from attempting a resurrection of Fascism, at least in its previous incarnation. |
| 18 Sep | Mussolini makes a defiant radio broadcast to Italy from Munich, affirming his republicanism and faith in the German alliance. |
| 23 Sep | Establishment of the Italian Social Republic (RSI), with its headquarters at Salò on Lake Garda. |
| Oct | Fearing for their safety, Marinetti and his family leave Rome and head to Venice. There, after living in humble lodgings for a short while, they occupy a house previously owned by a Jewish family. Over the course of the following nine months, Marinetti drafts a major poetic work (<i>L'aeropoema di Gesù</i>), a novel (<i>Venezianella e Studentaccio</i>) and several autobiographical writings. |
| 1 Oct | Naples liberated. |
| 2 Oct | Fasullo is seen for the last time by a wartime comrade in Istria, attempting to reach Trieste. |
| 13 Oct | Italy declares war on Germany. |

- 16-18 Oct** **Nazi troops round up Rome's Jewish population for deportation to the death camps.**
- 18 Oct Marinetti writes to Mussolini expressing his sorrow over the collapse of Fascism. He requests an audience – which is granted – and the two men meet eight days later at Villa Feltrinelli, Mussolini's official residence in Gargnano. Mussolini encourages the Futurist leader to move to the Garda area.
- 28 Oct Belloli publishes his *tipogrammi per marinetti*.
- Nov Marinetti develops a close friendship with the Japanese ambassador, Shinrokuro Hidaka.
- 14 Nov** **First Republican Fascist Party congress held in Verona.**

1944

Prampolini publishes his important theoretical essay *Arte polimaterica (verso un'arte collettiva?)*; Belloli publishes two ground-breaking volumes of visual poetry, *parole per la guerra* and *testi-poemi murali*.

- 11 Jan** **Ciano, De Bono and others executed in Verona for their 'betrayal' of Mussolini at the meeting of the Fascist Grand Council the previous July.**
- 22-29 Jan The final Futurist meeting is held in Marinetti's Venetian apartment.³

³ See Crali, 'Una vita per il Futurismo', in Rebeschini, *Crati aeropittore futurista*, cit., pp. 173-74. According to Crali's recollections only he, Acquaviva, Andreoni and Cucini attend. Despite the dates of this reunion being given as 22-29 January in Marinetti's letter of invitation to Crali (Cra.3.73) and on Crali's typewritten transcription of Marinetti's poem 'La riunione dei futuristi sul Canal Grande' (Cra.3.76), Mirella Duci variously states that it took place between 22-24 January and 22-26 January. See her introductory text

- Feb An article is published in the *Corriere della Sera* listing those intellectuals who have pledged their allegiance to the RSI. Marinetti's name does not appear, provoking a furious response from the Futurist leader.
- 4 Feb Crali and Marinetti sign their manifesto 'Musical Words – Alphabet in Freedom'.
- Mar The USSR formally recognises Badoglio's administration; subsequently, Togliatti's Communists join the government.**
- 24 Mar Nazi forces carry out the Ardeatine Caves massacre, killing 335 Italians in reprisal for a partisan attack on German troops in Rome the previous day. Among those murdered is Aladino Govoni, son of the erstwhile Futurist poet Corrado Govoni.**
- 3 Apr First of the 'Quarti d'ora di poesia' (Quarter-hour of Poetry) *serate* organised and directed by Farfa and Acquaviva in Savona; they continue to take place on a regular basis until 4 March 1945.
- May The Gustav Line collapses.**
- Marinetti publishes his eulogistic *L'aeropoema di Cozzarini*, celebrating the subject as the 'first hero of the republican army' for his defiance of the armistice, and commemorating his death on 10 November 1943 fighting the Allies in Campania.
- 4 Jun Rome liberated; subsequently, Badoglio resigns and is replaced by Bonomi.**
- 30 Jun Macerata is liberated – an event in which Tulli plays a role as a member of the Banda Nicolò partisan group.

'Cralifuturista e i suoi Libroni', in Duci, *Tullio Crali. Inventario*, cit., pp. 15-22 (p. 22, n. 7), and her notes to Cra.3.74, Cra.3.75, Cra.3.77 and Cra.3.78 on p. 148 of the inventory. Documents conserved in the Getty Research Institute (GRI 920092 / S. I, B. 4, F. 8) list attendees for 22-25 January only, but suggest a larger turnout than Crali recalls.

Jul	The Marinetti family leaves Venice and moves to Salò.
8 July	The first of Crali's wartime <i>raduni di poesia</i> (poetry meetings) is held in Gorizia. The ninth (and final) <i>raduno</i> is held on 14 April 1945.
Aug	Florence liberated. The exhibition <i>Art against Barbarism</i> , organised by the Communist newspaper <i>l'Unità</i> , opens at the Galleria di Roma.
23 Aug	Final meeting between Marinetti and Mussolini.
20 Sep	The morning after an attempted break-in at their villa, Marinetti and his family move from Salò to Como. With Switzerland its ultimate goal, the family then moves on to Cadenabbia and finally, on the recommendation of Hidaka, Bellagio.
Oct	Japanese <i>kamikaze</i> attacks commence during the Battle of Leyte Gulf.
28 Oct	Benedetto opens a <i>Solo Exhibition of Painting</i> at the POW camp in Yol where he remains interned.
1 Dec	Marinetti composes his final poem, 'Quarter of an Hour of Poetry of the X MAS (Sentiments Set to Music)'.
2 Dec	Marinetti suffers a fatal heart attack in Bellagio.
5 Dec	The Futurist leader's state funeral – ordered by Mussolini – is held at the Chiesa di San Sepolcro in Milan. His coffin is saluted by hundreds as the procession winds its way through the city streets towards the Cimitero Monumentale. Mussolini does not attend the ceremony but sends two wreaths: one in an official capacity, another as a personal tribute.
16 Dec	Mussolini delivers a rousing speech to the faithful at Milan's Teatro Lirico.

1945

Di Bosso's studio (which he shares with Verossi) is destroyed by aerial bombardment.

26 Apr Having entered the partisan struggle, Verossi is murdered in Verona by a drunken German soldier.

28 Apr **Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, are shot by partisans in the vicinity of Lake Como; the following day their corpses are displayed in Piazzale Loreto, Milan, alongside those of other *gerarchi*.**

30 Apr **Hitler commits suicide in Berlin.**

1 May Crali is arrested by Tito's militia in Gorizia. Imprisoned in terrible conditions, he is eventually released on 15 June.

7 May **Germany surrenders.**