## From Neoclassicism to Futurism

ITALIAN PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1800-1925

National Gallery of Art September 1, 2014– February 1, 2015

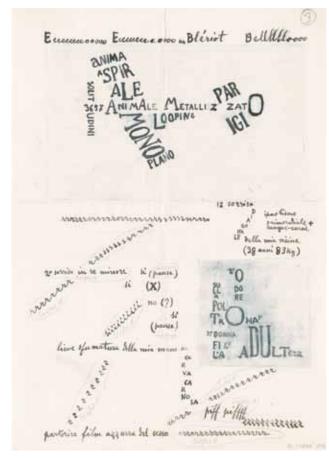


The visual arts in Italy were extraordinarily diverse and dynamic during the long, tortuous formation of the modern Italian state—from the first stirrings of nationalism around the time of Napoleon's campaigns (1796–1797) through unification as the Kingdom of Italy (1861) until the country's descent into fascism (1925). Nonetheless, Italian art of this era has been overshadowed by the monumental achievements of the past, from ancient Rome through the baroque period. Moreover, Italian art after the eighteenth century has been neglected in the usual histories of modern art, which have emphasized the more consistent direction and

developments in other countries, especially France. Recognizing the importance and richness of the period's art, the National Gallery of Art has begun to build a collection of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Italian prints and drawings. Broad in scope, deep in a number of areas, and excellent in quality, this collection is unparalleled outside Italy itself.

This exhibition is an introduction to both this little-known period and the Gallery's initiative. It consists of some seventy prints, drawings, and illustrated books from the nearly two hundred acquired in recent years, divided into three sections.





The first considers the persistence of traditional styles along with the dominant role of art academies through the first half of the nineteenth century. It features engravings after admired works of the past, neoclassical compositions, stage designs, and topographic views. The second section concerns the late arrival but long embrace of romantic ideals, which emphasized naturalism, individual expression, and original approaches to printmaking through the end of the century. The third section is devoted to critical precursors of modernism, such as Giovanni Fattori and Giovanni Boldini; to futurism, the radical and short-lived movement of the early twentieth century; and to such singular figures of early modern art as Giorgio Morandi. The sheer number of styles, the multiple centers of activity (Turin, Rome, Naples, Milan, Florence), and the eccentricity of many of the artists distinguish this period of art in Italy from elsewhere in Europe.

FIG. 1 Bartolomeo Pinelli, *Telemachus Requests Permission from Pluto to Seek His Father in the Underworld,* 1809, pen and ink over pencil, brown and gray washes, National Gallery of Art, Washington, William B. O'Neal Fund, 2014

FIG. 2 Giovanni Fattori, Woman of the Gabbro (Donna al gabbro), 1886–1887, etching, National Gallery of Art, Washington, The Ahmanson Foundation, 2013

FIG. 3 Carlo Carrà, *Graphic Rhythm with Airplane (Homage to Blériot)*, 1914, pen and ink with graphite and collage on graph paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund, 2004

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.



The exhibition celebrates the occasion of Italy's Presidency of the Council of the European Union from July 1 through December 31, 2014.

3