

**Eric and Salome  
Estorick**

**Memorial Exhibition**



**Grosvenor Gallery  
October 12th – 28th 1994**

## INTRODUCTION

Although my father remained a compulsive accumulator all his life (tribal artifacts, antiquities, Japanese netsuke, old newspapers, miniature jam pots, hotel laundry, luggage) his career as a 'pure' collector (his expression) lasted only about ten years and ended, on his own admission, with the exhibition of his Italian collection at the Tate in 1956. To be sure he continued to buy, as all dealers do – and kept much of what he bought: Braque's *Still Life with Pipe and Glass* from Tooth's in 1956, Picasso's *Dora Maar* the following year, Sickert's great late painting *Lazarus Breaks his Fast* in 1958, and in 1960 he exchanged Rousseau's *La Republique Française* with the actor Burt Lancaster for two Braques and a Cezanne watercolour.

Of the paintings on exhibition – and how many more we would have liked to show (de Chirico's *Melanconia* and Severini's great *Boulevard* are currently on loan elsewhere) – all the Italians were in the 1956 Tate show: the others, as many will remember, hung in the house in St. John's Wood in which Sal and Eric lived for 25 years from 1951.

As a 17 year old my father had frequently visited the Gallery of Living Art in New York's Washington Square College (now the Gallatin Collection at the Philadelphia Museum). By the age of 25 he had bought a Modigliani caryatid and, possibly, a "primitive Cezanne" from Klaus Perls. Soon after the war, in which he served in the U.S. Broadcast Intelligence Service, he found himself in Paris, spending the accumulated royalties from books he had edited on drawings by Picasso, Matisse, Juan Gris, Leger and Braque. His introduction to Italian art came soon afterwards. On holiday in Arosa, Switzerland, during the first months of their marriage, he and Sal were introduced by Peggy Cripps (daughter of the Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Stafford Cripps, of whom Eric had already published one biography and was later to write a second) to a former Bauhaus teacher, Arturo Bryks. Bryks showed Eric Boccioni's illustrated book "Futurism" and introduced him to Sironi and Campigli – two artists whose work Eric immediately fell in love with – and through Campigli he met Zoran Music, the painter to whom Eric remained closest of all.

What made Eric a great collector? A wonderful eye (though he was almost colour-blind), timing (artists like Derain and Sironi were politically unacceptable after the war), foresight (he bought Boccioni's *Modern Idol* from Marlborough for £600 and Balla's *Rhythm of the Violinist* from Lefevre for half that sum!), energy, voraciousness, a willingness to ask and take advice, above all a passion for painting.

"If I had been a really rich man I would have kept all the works of art that I possessed and would never have become a dealer", Eric once said, and if his serious collecting slowed down after the mid 1950's he certainly never stopped loving art (how he minded having sold all but one of his Morandi oils, but never thought to replace them even when he could easily afford to): much later, in the South African artist Dumile (to be shown at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1995), he felt he had found a draughtsman who compared with the very greatest; and though after leaving England in the mid 1970's he was unable to live with most of his pictures, he and Sal continued to loan them whenever asked.

And what of Sal's role? Eric's oft-repeated claim to have begun collecting with accumulated royalties sounds disingenuous, the special pleading of the self-made man reluctant, after marrying well, to be seen not to be able to hold his own. The prices of many of his greatest pictures were, by later standards, amazingly low: £5,600 for Braque's *Still Life with Pipe and Glass*, £1,500 in 1955 for de Chirico's *Melanconia* (from Peter Watson), \$1,400 in 1952 for Derain's self portrait, being among the most expensive. When they worked together in the Grosvenor Gallery and later masterminded the Erté revival, Sal and Eric were self-evidently a team: her discipline, loyalty, thoroughness and fluency in languages complementing his more elusive qualities. Certainly Sal loved art (she studied under Leonard Rosoman before the war). She had a strong sense of design and style and a personality as forceful and inimitable as Eric's. But with her refugee mentality she was suspicious of possessions. In the end the collection meant perhaps more to Eric, for whom art was the "God centre of the Altar at which I have already kneeled and in front of which I shall die and die happily".

Michael Estorick



*Eric and Salome Estorick with Erté, 1987*

## AN APPRECIATION

Once in a while, into this universe, comes a true adventurer, a radical, bold, convention-bashing soul. One who pays no attention to rules or boundaries, and sets his sights outside the ordinary.

Such a man was Eric. His vision and passion cannot be traced or accounted for, and his temperament and character remain equally mysterious.

What is exquisitely clear, however, is that even partially colour-blind, he could see and feel art with a zeal and appreciation rarely encountered.

He understood the artist's intentions, skill, craft, accomplishment and frustration. He loved to discover, nurture, introduce, educate and deal.

He partnered with Sal, a quieter and more discreet visionary, and their fused talents unleashed a treasure trove of works onto an unsuspecting public. Their taste was eclectic, unpredictable and endless, and for many years they surprised, shocked, delighted and outraged.

Now they are gone from this world as we know it – but they leave behind them their mark. A beautiful legacy of two lives committed to the appreciation of other peoples' most wondrous gifts.

Their collection will soon find its home in a teaching foundation, where, appropriately, it can affect the lives of future generations.

But for a brief, interim moment, a part of it is shown here, in tribute to Sal and Eric.

A reminder of who they were, and what they did with their lives.

With appreciation and love

Isobel Estorick

## COLLECTORS AND COLLECTING

If the collector has a creative contribution to make by the possession of works of art (other than intelligent presentation and scientific preservation) it is the configuration which he gives to these works. The passion and taste which he brings to this dedication is his unique contribution to the period of time these works spend with him. For, at the very best, the collector is a momentary vehicle in the work's eternal life. The work of art, realised, expressed and departed from the hand of the creator is an independent entity; it has few mortal bounds.

In presenting a collection of works for exhibition, the taste of the collector may perhaps be revealed. How much more dramatic, if less edifying aesthetically, would be an exhibition of the collectors of a work of art. Imagine the Akademie der Künste exhibiting (please put no rational bounds on this flight of fancy) the various owners of Rembrandt's "Portrait of Titus", Vermeer's "The Astronomer" and "Madonna with Jesus and St. John as children" by Luini. And then suppose that the paintings wrote their own introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition!

There is no possibility of giving a simple answer to the question of how and why one has come to collect various works of art. Basically one is searching for freedom and creative art is part of that search.

My first interest in 20th century Italian art was not by any means entirely unrelated to the works of the Futurists. A boyhood life in the metropolitan oasis of New York was Futurism in action, simultaneity of vision and motion. Thus Boccioni, Russolo, Soffici, Carrà, Balla and Severini were friends in an expanding life's adventure, without our having shaken hands.

Another aspect of one's life, that of the individual against the situation, the lonely man against the landscape – every man's dreaming Muse – was poignantly evoked for me by de Chirico. The palette of Campigli, Sironi, Morandi, Modigliani generated in me a mysterious chemistry which one cannot explain.

I had been prepared for this experience by the conditioning factor of almost daily proximity to the Gallatin Collection of 20th Century Art housed at that time in the Museum of Living Art at New York University and now in the Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art.

The Gallatin collection permitted me the daily usage of a ready-made collection. The shape and form of this collection had a profound effect on my conception of what a collection should be.

Twentieth Century Italian Art, brought out from behind an insularity to which it had been subjected for a quarter of a century, was for me a personal adventure in living art.

The danger of a collector's efforts to define in retrospect his reasons for forming his collection are that he will be bounded by his own definitions. The form of a collection at a particular time is a part of the collector's evolution just as the paintings are part of an artist's evolution.

A collection for me, is a living thing – not a fixity.

Consequently I can attempt only to understand my motives but not their absolute and final shape, not unlike Planck's atom, the present position of which one never knows, but only where it has been by the tracing of light it leaves behind.

ERIC ESTORICK (1957)

**Italian 20th Century Masters**  
**from**  
**The Eric and Salome Estorick Foundation**

1

**GIACOMO BALLA**

**The Hand of the Violinist 1912**

oil on canvas

*52 x 75cm*





2

**UMBERTO BOCCIONI**

**Modern Idol**

signed and dated 1911

oil on panel

*60 x 58cm*



3

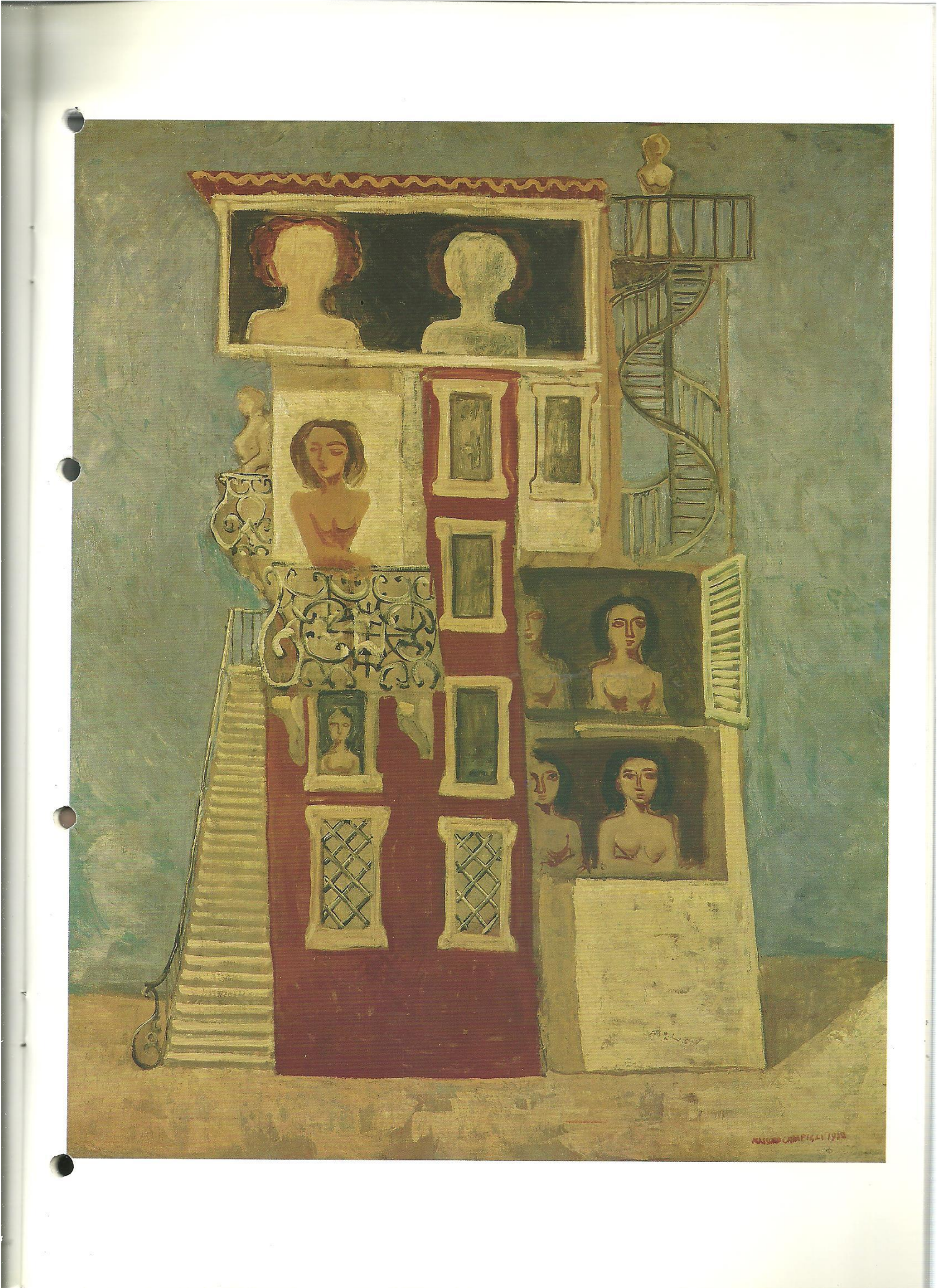
**MASSIMO CAMPIGLI**

**La Belvedere**

signed and dated 1930

oil on canvas

*100 x 80cr*



MASSIMO CAMPITELLI 1950

4

**CARLO CARRA**

**Leaving the Theatre** 1909

signed

oil on canvas

69 x 91cm



5 **GIORGIO DE CHIRICO**

**The Revolt of the Sage**

signed and dated 1916

oil on canvas

*68 x 59cm*





6 **AMEDEO MODIGLIANI**

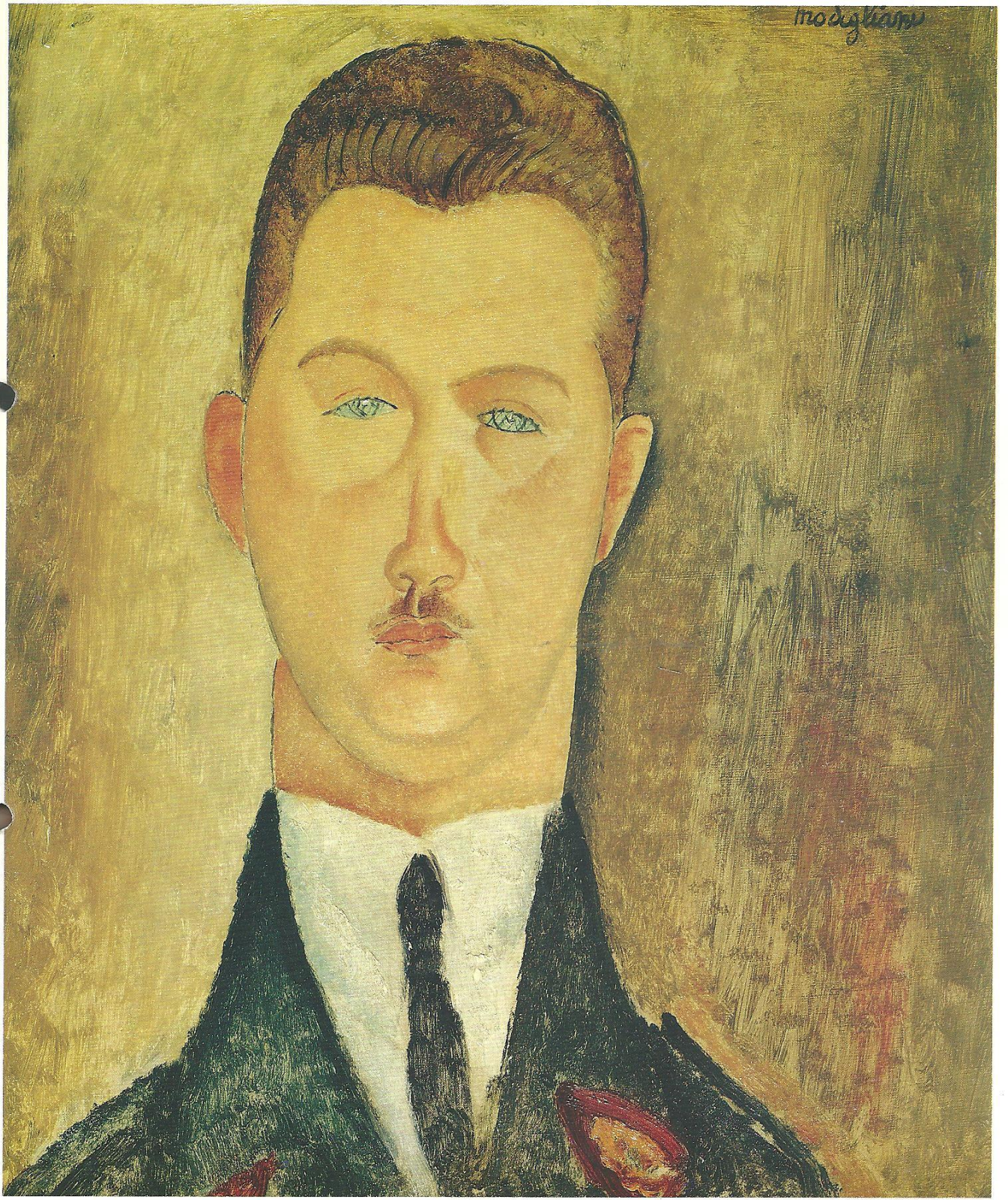
**Doctor Brabander 1919**

signed

oil on canvas

*46 x 38cm*

modigliani



7

**OTTONE ROSAI**

**Men Waiting** 1919

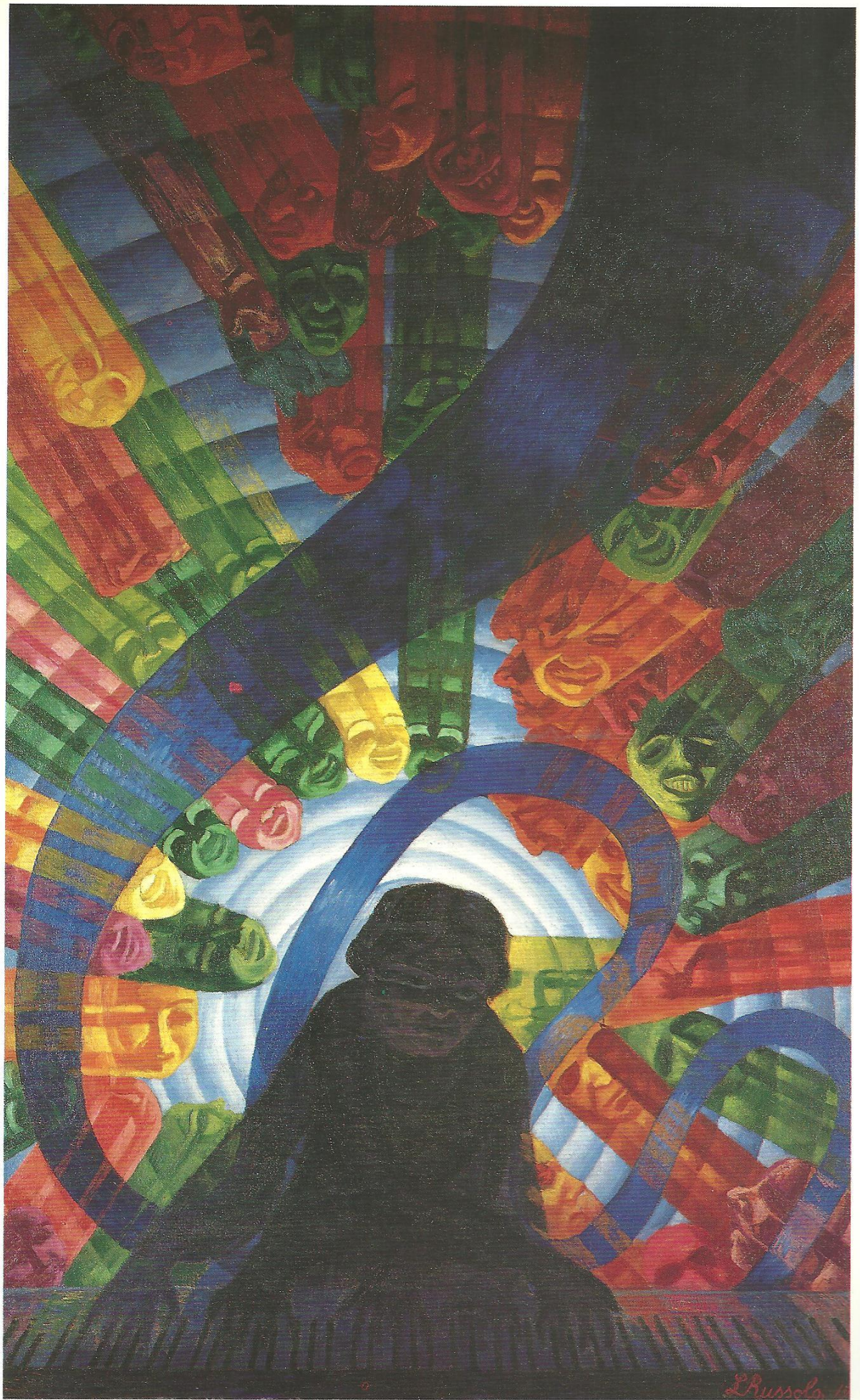
signed with initials

oil on canvas

21 x 21cm







Dance

signed and dated 1913

mixed media on board

75 x 50cm





10

**GINO SEVERINI**

**Quaker Oats 1917**

signed and dedicated to Geiger

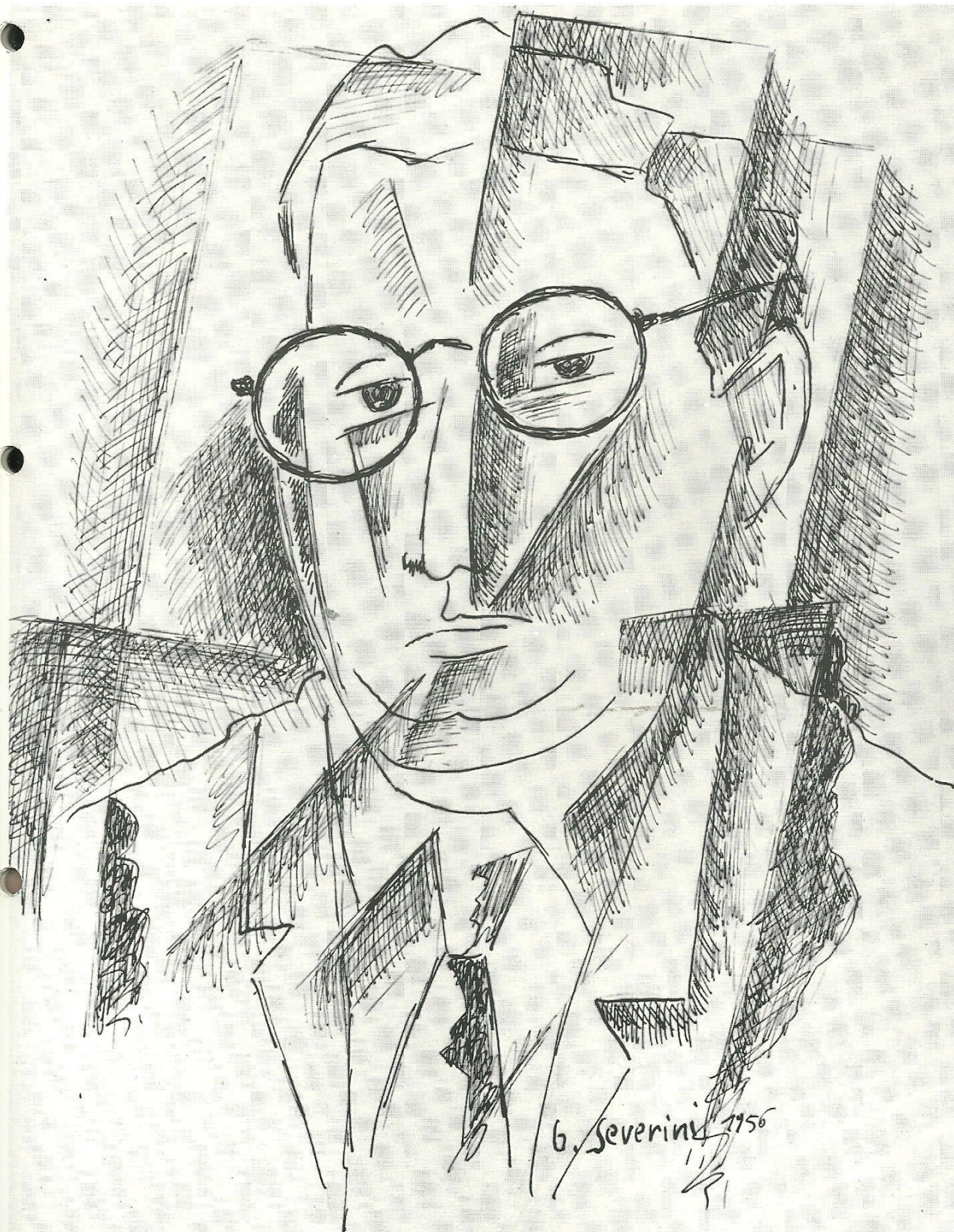
oil on canvas

*62 x 51cm*



*“On one occasion Severini indicated to me that he would like to do a pen portrait of me and so I came along to his studio one afternoon and he did the portrait. He didn’t like it and just threw the paper into the basket. He did another one and was equally dissatisfied with it, and threw the crumpled sheet into the basket. I acknowledged that I was returning to London the following day and he said: ‘Oh, I’ll send you the portrait to London.’ As he had made two attempts and destroyed both, the fact that I was leaving next morning meant that one just hoped that some time in the future I would receive the portrait. Well, I left for London and about a week later a little rolled up parcel came to me and I opened it and there, rolled up, was a portrait drawing of myself by him. Perfect! The thing he hadn’t been able to achieve whilst I was there, he did perfectly from memory!”*

**Erick Estorick – from an unpublished memoir.**










Picasso  
41



# 20th Century Masters

## Property of the Eric E. Estorick Estate

- 13 **GEORGES BRAQUE**   
**Verre, Pipe et Journal**  
signed on reverse and dated G. Braque 17  
oil on canvas  
*55 x 43cm*
- 14 **ANDRE DERAÏN**  
**Autoportrait a la Pipe en Terre** 1914  
oil on canvas laid down on board  
*54.4 x 35.5cm*
- 15 **RENE MAGRITTE**  *1w, 1109.*  
**Le Mouvement Perpetuel** 1935  
signed lower left Magritte  
oil on canvas  
*53.8 x 72.9cm*
- 16 **JULES PASCIN**  
**Portrait de Flechtheim**  
oil on canvas  
*58 x 52.5cm*
- 17 **PABLO PICASSO**   
**Buste de Femme (Dora Maar)**  
signed and dated upper left Picasso 41  
signed and dated on the stretcher 29 Mai 41  
oil on canvas  
*55 x 46cm*  
See illustration



# GROSVENOR GALLERY

*Exhibition Schedule*

1994-95

—\*\*\*—

GREAT SCULPTORS c.1900 - 1950  
Masterpieces for Collectors and Museums  
*November 8th - December 2nd*

—\*\*\*—

ARTISTS IN COLLAGE  
KOLAR - MESENS - SCHWITTERS  
*December 7th - December 22nd*

—\*\*\*—

ART FROM SOUTH AFRICA c.1960  
DUMILE - KUMALO - STERN - SKOTNES  
*January 11th - February 8th*

—\*\*\*—

HENRY MOORE - ALEXANDER CALDER  
Drawings and Sculpture  
*February 15th - March 10th*

—\*\*\*—

ART FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
GUTFREUND - HOFFMEISTER - JANECEK  
*March 22nd - April 13th*

—\*\*\*—

EL LISSITSKY  
Watercolours and Lithographs  
*April 20th - May 26th*

—\*\*\*—

RUSSIAN ART OF THE 1960's  
Drawings, Paintings and Sculpture  
*June 7th - June 30th*