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AMONG FRIENDS: ITALIAN FUTURISM COMES TO AMERICA

Abstract: The arrival and transformation of Italian Futurist ideas in the salon culture of New York City in the early and mid 20th century is investigated through an exploration of the friendship between the 'first American Futurist' painter, Joseph Stella and the composer, Edgard Varèse. Several key paintings by Stella and two Futurist visual works by Varèse as well as their writings and participation in the artistic community in New York City clarify the unique unfolding of Futurism in this milieu.

Key words: Joseph Stella, Edgard Varèse, Futurism, America, Painting, Music.

A bold audacious attitude is required to attempt a radical break with the past and Filippo Marinetti and his cohort of artists and supporters have been preserved in historical writings and artistic projects as just such a group of forceful individuals. In the United States, Italian Futurism collided with an alternative social and cultural context which cross-fertilized it in unique ways, a process that will be explored in this paper. Crucial in this process was the visual artist Joseph Stella (1877-1946), an Italian immigrant to the United States who was known as the 'first American Futurist'. The title of 'Futurist composer' was similarly bestowed upon Edgard Varèse (1883-1965) by the popular press, a designation he vehemently resisted but one that has nonetheless remained part of his legacy.²

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² See, for example: Malcolm MacDonald, *Varèse: Astronomer in Sound*, London, Kahn & Averill, 2003, 73-77; Jürg Stenzel, 'Edgard Varèse and Italian Futurism': in Felix Meyer and Heidi Zimmermann (eds), *Varèse: Composer Sound Sculptor Visionary*, Suffolk, The Boydell Press, 2006, 142-8.

Stella emigrated from Italy to New York City in 1897 with the intention of attending medical school but quickly switched to pursue an art career, studying with William Merritt Chase, founder of the New York School of Art and Robert Henri, who became an instructor there in 1903.³ Stella became known as a talented illustrator, producing a series of portraits of workers and immigrants in Pittsburgh in 1905.⁴ He had returned earlier that year from Barbados where he had met and married the Barbadian, Mary French.⁵

Stella's urban New York life alternated with frequent European travel, primarily around Naples and Paris, as well as trips to the Caribbean and north Africa, creating a unique palate of influences and experiences through which to view the Futurist agenda on American soil. Stella embarked on a trip to Europe in 1909, just as Marinetti was provoking attention with his Italian Futurist manifesto. Based on a few extant letters, it appears that Stella attended a Futurist performance and exhibition in Paris in 1912, later corresponding briefly with the Italian Futurist artist, Carlo Carrá, indicating they had once met at the Futurist exhibition there.⁶

Stella returned to New York City in 1912, becoming involved in preparations for the controversial Armory Show (International Exhibition of Modern Art) held in New York City, 17 February to 15 March, 1913. His exhibited painting, *Still Life*, was not a Futurist work but rather displays the influence of Henri Matisse and other artists whose art Stella had seen in Paris.⁷ The boldest pieces in the exhibition, especially Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* and Francis Picabia's *Dancing at the Source*, initiated widespread discussion of Cubist and Futurist issues in the United States, including dynamism and the challenge

³ Chase and Henri are two crucial figures in the Ashcan School, an artistic approach depicting harsh urban realism--the ugly, the disfigured, poor workers, and urban structures including bridges and factories.

⁴ Stella's immigrant portraits appeared in social reform journals such as *Outlook* (1905) which advocated for immigrant rights as part of a larger US movement highlighting urban poverty using 'social reform' photography to improve social conditions. See: Kay Davis, *Photography and Social Reform* (2006), <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/photography/reform/reform.html>.

⁵ For reasons that have never been fully documented, he left Barbados alone. Mary French later did live with him in New York in the mid 1930s.

⁶ See, for example, Barbara Haskell, *Joseph Stella*, New York, Whitney Museum of Art, 1994 and Irma Jaffe, *Joseph Stella*, New York, Fordham University Press, 1988 for biographical details.

⁷ Stella apparently exhibited two paintings but only the one entitled *Still Life* is definitely identified in his biographies. See for example, Haskell, op. cit., 31-5.

of portraying motion across time in a single canvas.⁸ It was in this context that Stella began to explore the artistic possibilities of Futurism.

Marinetti advocated for the replacement of traditional concepts of beauty with valorization of the machine, motion, and speed.⁹ However, it was the glorification of war and violence that has caused Futurism to often be marginalized by later artists and scholars. It is precisely the absence or inversion of this violence that most accurately characterizes the American version of Futurism. By 1913, Marinetti had published excerpts from his Futurist sound poem *The Battle of Adrianople or Zang Tumb Tumb*,¹⁰ in which he recreates the sounds of war.¹¹ It was also in 1913 that Stella created his own Futurist battle masterpiece—but his studies and canvases were focused on a far different type of battle than Marinetti's. Stella's *Battle of Lights, Coney Island, Mardi Gras*¹² demonstrates a mastery of Futurist aesthetics—dynamism, an intensely active canvas, multiple perspectives, the presence of machines and modern culture. Yet the battle he glorifies is one of competing electric lights and groups of revelers engaged in a Mardi Gras celebration at Coney Island.

An examination of Stella's *Study for Battle of Lights, Coney Island*¹³ shows a strong influence from Picabia's *Dance at the Source* in terms of the geometric and dynamic energy and color on the picture's surface. This same process is visible throughout the final *Coney Island* canvas especially in the upper right corner and along the lower portions, but the visual options are vibrantly expanded with swirling curlicues and arabesques, vectors, wheels, printed words, dots suggestive of points of light, even a clearly rendered horned Carnival mask, evoking a powerful but unique expression of dynamism.

⁸ Jan Thompson, 'Picabia and His Influence on American Art, 1913-17', *Art Journal: College Art Association*, 1979, JSTOR accessed 12 June 2009. The Futurists decided as a group not to exhibit at the Armory Show, preferring to put their energy into independent exhibits in Europe. Jaffe, op. cit., 242.

⁹ Filippo Marinetti, *The Futurist Manifesto*, 1909. See, for example, translation: <http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~crshalizi/T4PM/futurist-manifesto.html> (accessed 15 August 2009).

¹⁰ Poem included in Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noise*, Milan, 11 March 1913, translated in Michael Kirby, *Futurist Performance*, New York, E. P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1971, 166-74.

¹¹ This battle (1912-13) involved military and underlying racial/political issues. Italy, currently fighting against the Ottoman Empire in Libya, especially valued the Turkish defeat. From a Futurist perspective, these conflicts were compelling for their use of new war technology including airplanes and aerial bombs. See, for example, Timothy Childs, *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy and the War Over Libya. 1911-1912*, Leiden, Brill, 1990.

¹² Painting owned by Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven. See Haskell, op. cit., 49.

¹³ See Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, TX www.cartermuseum.org/exhibitions/past.

But what of Marinetti's *Battle of Adrianople*? Was Stella's reference to 'battle' only a clever Futurist turn of phrase for the canvas' title? Apparently not. According to an extensive New York Times article (4 May 1913) promoting the upcoming Coney Island season, the highlight attraction of the opening week of Carnival would be a Luna Park 'spectacle' entitled 'Fire and Sword' representing:

'the siege and capture of a fortified city in the Near East (presumably Adrianople)¹⁴ . . . on the sides of the big stage are the mosques and shops of the city that is to be destroyed . . . the great tank into which horses and warriors will plunge . . . when mosques and houses are in flames and cannons are booming.'

The 1913 Coney Island Carnival was not only intended to create a sensual 'carnal frenzy' (Stella's own words)¹⁵ but to provide a re-enactment of the specific battle also recently memorialized by Marinetti. But a re-enactment is not actually a war and the difference between Marinetti's and Stella's aural and visual experiences showcases the contextual contrast between the two distinct expressions of Futurism.

Soon afterwards, when Marcel Duchamp and Edgar Varèse arrived in New York City in 1915, they became regular participants at the salon of Walter and Louise Arensberg, a gathering place already part of Stella's social and artistic world. Duchamp's charismatic presence at the salon eventually linked America's 'first Futurist' and Varèse to the Dadaist movement in addition to their perceived Futurist connections.¹⁶ That same year, Picabia and his wife, Gabrielle Buffet Picabia, returned to the United States. While she again traveled back to Europe, Varèse and Picabia lived together in New York. Varèse's future wife, Louise Norton Varèse, relates that the two men 'would . . . stalk around the apartment within a few inches, if that, of stark nakedness, thus informally receiving their feminine guests.'¹⁷ Although this is a second hand report from her housekeeper since Ms. Norton had not yet met Varèse but had only rented her apartment to the Picabias while she was away, it illuminates the spirited attitude of the artist

¹⁴ Parentheses in original.

¹⁵ See John F. Kasson, 'Seeing Coney Island, Seeing Culture: Joseph Stella's *Battle of Lights*', *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 1998:11, 95-101, for a full discussion of this idea, JSTOR accessed 24 June 2009.

¹⁶ The afternoon in 1917 that Duchamp purchased the urinal for his *Fountain* ready-made art, he first had lunch with Stella and Arensberg who then accompanied him to the foundry to select the piece. Robert Crunden in *American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism: 1885-1917*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993, 435-6, suggests that they may well have paid for the urinal as well as conferred extensively with Duchamp about the concept.

¹⁷ Louise Varèse, *Varèse: A Looking Glass Diary*. New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1972, 131-2.

circle focusing on new artistic expressive means – and their intentional defiance of conventional norms regarding modesty, sexual mores, and family structure.

In contrast to the Italian Futurists, individuality rather than an exclusive connection to any specific group defined by rules and manifestos was strongly supported by the cultural context of the New York salons, creating an ‘artistic collective’ for its members, allowing for collaboration and exploration rather than ‘combative rhetoric or hierarchical organization.’¹⁸ The Futurist poet, Mina Loy, describes an atmosphere of camaraderie, sexual freedom, gender acceptance, and alcohol use that pervaded the salon gatherings.¹⁹ Gabrielle Picabia, a long-time friend of Varèse from their student days, claims the Arensberg salon was ‘an inconceivable orgy of sexuality, jazz, and alcohol.’²⁰ Louise Arensberg sometimes avoided the gatherings herself, preferring the opera to the unrestrained salon behavior.²¹ Women and men mixed freely at the Arensberg salon, and both heterosexual and homosexual friendships were acknowledged. The presence of this freewheeling sexual behavior stands in stark contrast to the attitudes expressed in the Futurist writings of Marinetti and others who derided the ‘feminine.’²² Stella and Varèse soon established a close friendship, sharing ‘a kindred – a creative – passion for New York.’²³ So, when Louise Varèse traveled to Europe in 1921, she asked Stella to look after Varèse’s needs.²⁴

Varèse achieved the crucial establishment of the International Composers’ Guild (ICG) at this time of close association with Stella. Refusing to compromise his agenda of presenting newly composed musical works while conductor of the New Symphony Orchestra, Varèse resigned his position in protest of what he considered to be the organization’s highly restrictive policies. Resistance by prominent musical organizations to support performances of new music encour-

¹⁸ Stephen Voyce, ‘Make the World Your Salon: Poetry and Community at the Arensberg Apartment’, *Modernism/modernity*, 2008, 15, 632, JSTOR accessed 11 April 2009.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 628-9.

²⁰ *Telegraph.co.uk*, 16 February 2008.

²¹ Crunden, *op. cit.*, 412.

²² See, for example, Cinzia Blum, ‘Rhetorical Strategies and Gender in Marinetti’s Futurist Manifesto’, *Italica: American Association of Teachers of Italian*, 1990, 67, 196-211, JSTOR accessed 24 July 09. Blum suggests that the Futurist view of reality, including sexual reality, is ‘rigidly binary... along gender lines between a virile self and a feminine or feminized other... [leading to] the construction of the text as a site for violence, in which woman often figures as a target,’ 201-2.

²³ L. Varèse, *op. cit.*, 157.

²⁴ During this time Stella executed the silverpoint portrait of Varèse, used on the 1 March 1925 program cover for the concert including Varèse’s *Intégrales* premiere. Meyer and Zimmermann (eds), *op. cit.*, 85 and R. Allen Lott, ‘New Music for New Ears: The International Composers’ Guild’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 1983, 36, 285.

aged Varèse and his friend Carlos Salzedo to establish the ICG on 31 May 1921 for that specific purpose.²⁵ Varèse included Stella on the Executive Board of Directors to help him undertake this work.²⁶

Stella had already participated as a founding member of numerous art organizations supporting similar missions of bringing new works to the attention of the public. In 1916 he was a founding member of the Society of Independent Artists (SIA), the group that, though claiming to be totally democratic, rejected Duchamp's 'R. Mutt' *Fountain*. Duchamp, Stella, and Arensberg resigned from SIA after that rejection.²⁷ In the months prior to the establishment of the ICG, Katherine Dreier, Duchamp, and Man Ray established the Société Anonyme (SA), including Stella in their founding circle. SA's mission was 'promotion of the international avant-garde'²⁸ and 'to present contemporary art to American audiences from the point of view of artists rather than curators, critics, or art historians.'²⁹

The intentions and manifesto of the ICG, as a resource for composers to present innovative works to a wider public closely reflected for music the aims that the SA had for art. Varèse's motivation, one worth 'fighting for' was 'the right of each individual to secure a fair and free presentation of his work.' These determined words were part of the manifesto he created for the ICG, a declaration published in the first issue of *Broom: An International Journal of the Arts Published by Americans in Italy* (November 1921). His famous claim that the ICG 'disapproves of all "isms", denies the existence of schools, recognizes only the individual' appears in that text.³⁰ A full-page reproduction of Stella's *Brooklyn Bridge* appears in the same issue. The following month, Stella's *The Swans, The Nightingale, and Serenade* appeared along with his speech *On Painting*. Here, like his close friend Varèse had done in the previous issue, he rants against slavishly following any rules – 'rules don't exist' – and instead claims 'the motto of the modern artist is freedom – real freedom . . . He recognizes personalities and not their derivations, the schools.' Stella also notes the irony inherent in this pursuit of artistic freedom because 'every declaration of Independence carries somewhat

²⁵ See R. Allen Lott, op. cit., 266-86.

²⁶ L. Varèse, op. cit., 165.

²⁷ Crunden, op. cit., 436.

²⁸ William Clark, 'Katherine Dreier and the Société Anonyme.' *Variant*, 14. http://www.variant.randomstate.org/14texts/William_Clark.html. (Accessed 15 May 2009)

²⁹ Yale University Art Gallery Press Release, *Société Anonyme: Modernism for America Exhibition* (2006). http://artgallery.yale.edu/pages/collection/exhibitions/ex_traveling.html. (Accessed 15 May 2009)

³⁰ Edgard Varèse, 'Manifesto for the ICG', *Broom*, 1921, 1, 94-5.

a declaration of a new slavery.³¹ Both Varèse and Stella were adamant in their refusal to be part of a 'school' and their wide ranging artistic outputs are a testament to the 'anti-ism' claims that they each made.

In the throes of this passionate pursuit of 'real freedom', Stella painted a highly acclaimed five canvas grouping of New York scenes between 1920-22, entitled *New York Interpreted (The Voice of the City)*. Stella conceived the panels as five movements of a symphony.³² One of those images, *The Port* [Illustration 1] was later prepared for use as the cover illustration for Varèse's *Octandre* (1924) however it was not used in the actual publication.³³ The entire series was subsequently published in book form, a copy of which Stella gave to Louise Varèse with a hand-written inscription.³⁴

Later in his career, Stella again returned to urban themes he had explored when initially addressing Futurist aesthetics, especially apparent in *Metropolitan Port* (1937), *Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme* (1939), and *Old Brooklyn Bridge* (1941).³⁵ Concurrently, he painted a striking canvas entitled *The Guitar Player* (ca. 1940). [Illustration 2] The guitar player as visual subject matter was used repeatedly by the avant-garde. Picasso, Braque, Dali, Matisse, and Miro, for example, all rendered this subject in the early 20th century. Painting such a familiar topic during a time of return and reflection evokes Stella's accumulated artistic and personal experience.³⁶ A ruggedly muscular guitar player, with dark hair and skin tones suggestive of a Mediterranean peasant is captured in a pose that renders the momentary – left hand poised in tense preparation prior to plucking the (non-existent) strings. The guitarist offers little allusion to Futurism but rather recalls Stella's immigrant portraits. However, the underpinnings of Futurism are vibrantly displayed in the musician's chair. With intense red and sharp angles, the chair becomes the focal point of the painting. The rendering of the musician's cloak interrupts any sense of stability provided by the chair – the back legs, if they even exist, are completely hidden. The chair's design connects directly to Futurist visual vocabulary, alluding to the Futurist painter and musician, Luigi Russolo's bold red vectors on a bright blue background in *The Revolt*

³¹ Joseph Stella, 'On Painting', *Broom* 1921, 1, 119-23.

³² Jaffe, op. cit., 71.

³³ Meyer and Zimmermann (eds), op. cit., 170-1.

³⁴ Ibid., 80.

³⁵ Paintings owned by National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Collection; Whitney Museum of Art; and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, respectively.

³⁶ Naples, his 'sister-city' to New York, is the historical home of the guitar. At least two of the few extant photographs of Stella show him seated, holding a guitar. See, for example, *Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Joseph Stella Papers*, and Haskell, op. cit., frontispiece.

(1911) and *Dynamism of an Automobile* (1912-13).³⁷ It is clear that Stella consistently and often unexpectedly incorporates Futurist forms into canvases that also include far different expressive means.

Varèse outlived Stella, who died in 1946, by nearly 20 years, realizing multiple musical projects and historic innovations during that time. But an intriguing visual work by Varèse, entitled *Portes* (1955) [Illustration 3] suggests a continued connection to Stella's Futurist visual language. Varèse had spent 1954 in Paris preparing for a premiere of *Déserts* which innovatively utilized taped Interpolations antiphonally with instrumental sections. He returned to the US early in 1955, where the work was again performed.³⁸

One of the most striking features of Stella's aforementioned *The Port* is the lower border using dynamism to show the port searchlights changing over time. This area is subtly separated from the main portion of the image by a contrasting background. Jaffe explains this technique, used consistently by Stella, as an adaptation of a predella, the narrow and often less visually constrained portion of a traditional Medieval altarpiece.³⁹ The picture plane is divided into several smaller areas by strong horizontal and vertical lines, suggesting the cable and pulley system of a New York port and referencing Futurist 'lines of force'.⁴⁰ Especially prominent is a horizontal line in pale bluish purple, delineating a dark sky dominating the top third of the canvas and highlighting the light and shadows cast by powerful searchlights, especially at the center of the composition.

Varèse's *Portes* extends these elements in a dramatic way, employing the ubiquitous Futurist color palate of vibrant reds and blues.⁴¹ The black sweeping curve through the center of the picture plane and the angular structures show influence of Futurist visual language generally and *The Port* and *Metropolitan Port* images specifically. Varèse includes a 'predella' in the top third of the image with repetitive triangles, a purplish blue line across the horizontal plane and a building-like structure replete with geometric shapes that recall Stella's use of color in *The Port* and his *Brooklyn Bridge* images.

³⁷ Sylvia Martin, *Futurism*. Köln, Taschen, 2005, 38, 52.

³⁸ Denise Von Glahn in 'Empty Spaces': The Conceptual Origins of *Déserts* in: Meyer and Zimmermann (eds), op. cit., 302, states: 'While Varèse had distanced himself from the Italian Futurists... he also recognized the worthiness of their quest for an expanded sonic palette... We hear the long-awaited results of Varèse's efforts to create new sounds in the three electronic interpolations that are interleaved in *Déserts*'.

³⁹ Irma Jaffe, *Joseph Stella's Madonna's*, New York, Snyder Fine Art, 1993, 3.

⁴⁰ Jaffe, *Joseph Stella*, op. cit., 40.

⁴¹ See Russolo's *The Revolt*, for example.

A drawing by Varèse contemporary to *Portes* depicting 'three light beacons' with their respective shadows is found on a 'loose paper' associated with the *Déserts* musical sketches.⁴² Varèse, who had a long-standing interest in film and the emotional power inherent in the interaction and opposition of visual imagery and light with sonic scores, conceived of *Déserts* as the basis of a film which was to incorporate powerful images but no specific storyline.⁴³ Already in the 1930s while consulting with Varèse on *L'Astronome* (one of his alternative versions of *Espace*), the photographer, Brassard' recalled that '[t]he "spotlights," the "beams of light" . . . are explicit in Varèse's scenario and an essential part of his compositional idea.'⁴⁴ For Varèse, the spatial sensation of music was 'a feeling akin to beams of light sent forth by a powerful searchlight--for the ear as for the eye, that sense of projection, a journey into space.'⁴⁵

Varèse's searchlights created in connection with *Déserts* have a significant resemblance to the searchlights and shadows depicted by Stella in *The Port* and *Metropolitan Ports* reinforcing the premise that Varèse was connected to Stella's visual imagery concurrent with his composing of *Déserts*. Varèse's trio of searchlights particularly echo the searchlight in the center of *The Port* that casts shadows of white mist and colorful geometric forms in multiple directions.

Varèse's *Portes* is not only a visual image but includes a poem with the same title on the reverse side. The words, song lyrics written in 1955 by the singer, Leo Ferré, based on a 13th century trouvère, strongly highlight the nostalgic/reflective component of the work.

'What has become of my friends, Those I held so very close, And loved so dearly, I believe the wind has taken them, They are friends carried off by the wind, And it blew in front of my door.'⁴⁶

At that point in time, Varèse had achieved significant fame and successful collaborations in which he had materialized many ground-breaking sonic concepts, yet he still had not found a laboratory in which to bring additional experimental ideas to fruition.⁴⁷ *Portes* evokes a longing for the camaraderie and exhilaration of previous times and creates a direct reference not only to Stella's

⁴² Von Glahn, op. cit., 303-4.

⁴³ Olivia Mattis, 'Varèse's Multimedia Conception of *Déserts*', *The Musical Quarterly*, 1992, 76, 559, 562-3, JSTOR accessed 19 October 2009.

⁴⁴ Mattis, op. cit., 572.

⁴⁵ Mattis, op. cit., 573, from a lecture Varèse presented in August 1936.

⁴⁶ Translation in Meyer and Zimmermann (eds), op. cit., 396.

⁴⁷ Chou Wen-Chung, 'Varèse A Sketch of the Man and His Music', *The Musical Quarterly*, 1966, 52, 165, JSTOR accessed 19 October 2009.

unique visual vocabulary but also Varèse's fascination with the powerful interplay of light and sound.

Throughout his career and life-long connection with Varèse, Stella explored Futurist visual language, incorporating it into his widely varied visual images. His was not a rigid approach but rather one continually seeking the 'freedom' to make multiple visual approaches work together harmoniously. Varèse, while vehemently denying adherence to Futurism, understood Futurism's primary aims and continued to pursue the realization of compositions juxtaposing new timbres, new instrumentation, innovative rhythmic nuances, noise, and electronic means. Varèse and Stella demonstrated an American expression of Futurism – in itself a denial of 'being a Futurist'. For them, the city with its machines and new sights and sounds was a glorious source of information and inspiration. But war, violence and misogyny were not necessary ingredients for the achievement of their artistic projects. The New York artistic world they inhabited was a privileged amalgamation of international influences and strong-willed personalities, creating art in a context fully cognizant of Italian Futurist manifestos and aesthetics but not beholden to them.

Дајан Глејзер

МЕЂУ ПРИЈАТЕЉИМА: ДОЛАЗАК ИТАЛИЈАНСКОГ ФУТУРИЗМА У АМЕРИКУ

САЖЕТАК

Италијански футуризам нашао је пут до Америке кроз стваралаштво неколико уметника који су овом покрету били изложени у Европи почетком 1909, укључујући Џозефа Стелу (Joseph Stella), „првог америчког футуристичког сликара“. Пратећи чувени *Armory Show* у Њујорку 1913, где су Дишан (Duchamp) и Пикабија (Picabia) излагали радове који су изазвали неразумеваше новоевропских трендова у САД, Стела је почео у потпуности да истражује естетику футуризма. Његов први значајни футуристички рад био је *Battle of Lights, Coney Island, Mardi Gras* (1913). Насупрот футуристичкој визији рата, ова „битка“ ('battle') је славила време „телесне помаме“.

Био је укључен у салон Волтера (Walter) и Луиз Арензберг (Louise Arensberg), место друштвене и уметничке размене у Њујорку. Избегавајући мизогинију коју су изражавали италијански футуристи, салонски живот у Њујорку прихватио је широк опсег сексуалног и друштвеног понашања мушкараца и жена. То је било место где су се упознали Стела и Варез (Edgard Varèse). Када је Варез основао Међународно удружење композитора, поставио је Стелу у Управљачки одбор. Стела је већ био укључен у оснивање неколико група које су јавно промовисале савремену уметност, упркос томе шта су критичари говорили о њој.

Међу Стелиним најзначајнијим футуристичким радовима била је група од шест платна под називом *New York Interpreted (Voices of the City)*, 1920-22. Једна од слика, *The*

Port, била је припремана за насловну страну партитуре Варезеовог дела *Octandre*, али није никада издата у том формату. Стела је током свог стваралаштва, као и Варез, одбијао да буде категоризован као футуриста, те је у својим радовима поред футуристичких елемената користио и друга експресивна средства. На пример, у делу *The Guitar Player* (око 1940) Стела је комбиновао своје вештине као илустратор и уметник портрета са добро развијеним футуристичким визуелним вокабуларом.

Неколико година након Стелине смрти, Варез је компоновао *Déserts* (1954), иновативно инкорпорирајући електронска средства у ово дело, чиме је наговестио оригиналне футуристичке аспекте у музици (Варез је, међутим, и даље истицао своју неповезаност са италијанским футуризмом). Истовремено, Варез је завршио нацрт пројектора и слику *Portes* (1955), која је била инспирисана Стелиним делом *The Port*. На позадини слике *Portes* исписана је поема о пријатељству, у којој је наглашена носталгична позадина овог визуелног рада.

Стела и Варез су били актери америчке верзије футуризма – одбијајући да „буду“ футуристи и ушлићући у естетику футуризма друга уметничка средства у контексту где рат, насиље и мизогинија нису били неопходни састојци за достизање уметничких циљева.

Кључне речи: Џозеф Стела, Едгар Варез, футуризам, Америка, сликарство, музика.

ILLUSTRATIONS:⁴⁸

Illustration 1

Joseph Stella, *Voice of the City of New York Interpreted: The Port*, 1920-22, oil and tempera on canvas; 88.5 x 54 in. Purchase 1937 Felix Fuld Bequest Fund, Collection of the Newark Museum.



⁴⁸ Special thanks to the painting owners and Paul Sacher Foundation for generously allowing the use of these images.

Illustration 2

Joseph Stella, *The Guitar Player* (ca 1940) (by permission of Private Collector/NY)



Illustration 3

Edgard Varèse, *Portes* (1955) (by permission of Camera 16/Paris; reproduction provided by the Paul Sacher Foundation)

