

MODERN ART PAGE 1

Who is your favourite post-war artist? Do you know what type of art futurism is?

Rearrange these words to make the headlines for two articles:

The Times: Italians Futurism back to the days of hark

The Mail: Rothko's art market tops a night of history White Centre

Now read these extracts from the articles and decide which article each one is from.



One of Italy's most controversial art movements, which has strong ties to Fascism, is back in vogue with a string of new exhibitions, catwalk shows and even a restaurant devoted to its cuisine.

A Mark Rothko abstract painting became the most expensive work of post-war art sold at auction when it went for \$72.8 million (£36.8 million) at Sotheby's in New York.

Futurism, which promised to "exalt aggressive action" and "glorify war - the world's only hygiene", grew out of a desire to embrace Italy's industrial future and reject history, religion and even the country's national dish. Its founder, Filippo Marinetti, a poet, was friends with Benito Mussolini, and the two were arrested together at pro-war demonstrations in 1915.

Marinetti wrote that the movement would celebrate "the vibrant nightly fervour of arsenals and shipyards blazing with violent electric moons". He believed in speed, machines and violence.

An anonymous telephone bidder bought Rothko's 1950 White Center (Yellow, Pink and Lavender on Rose) from 91-year-old philanthropist David Rockefeller. Mr Rockefeller had bought the painting for \$8,500 in 1960.

Although the 100th anniversary of Futurism is still two years away, Italy's museums have launched an unprecedented series of exhibitions to celebrate the movement.

Although White Center had been widely expected to break the record set by a Willem de Kooning painting last November, the price paid – more than £15 million above its estimate - once again left art experts reeling.

Vittorio Sgarbi, the outspoken "culture tsar" of Milan, has promised "a great Futurist party for the end of the year". Boccioni himself might not have been impressed. He wrote that Futurism would "fight the vicious existence of museums" and "rebel against the spineless worshipping of old statues".

The Architect's Home In The Ravine (1991) by Scottish artist Peter Doig sold for £1.8 million, double its high estimate of £900,000. Doig is perhaps the living artist who is benefiting most from the current art boom - his 1991 painting White Canoe astonished art experts by selling for £5.73 million in February.

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Born Marcus Rothkowitz in Latvia in 1903, Mark Rothko emigrated to America at the age of 10. After dropping out of Yale University, he moved to New York, making his name in art circles from the late Twenties.

Maria Teresa Florio, the head of the Milan's Civic Art Collection, said: "Without Futurism, you cannot understand the rest of 20th century art in Italy. It was the foundation."

In 1935, he was a founding member of the Ten, an artistic collective dedicated to abstract painting and Expressionism. In 1946 he began painting his trademark colour band paintings. He killed himself in his New York studio in 1970.

Discussion Why do you think people are spending so much on art? Which genres of art have come out of your country as Futurism came out of Italy?

Language focus If these are the answers, what are the questions?

Fascism

\$72.8 million

1950

Mr Rockefeller

White Canoe

Latvian

Suicide

Vocabulary focus Complete these sentences with words from the articles:

- 1 "Which holiday destination is in _____ this year?" "I think South America is very popular."
- 2 "There have been a _____ of burglaries in this area over the past month." "I know, my neighbour was burgled last week and the people who live on the corner the week before."
- 3 We bought our house at _____ and had to bid against other interested buyers.
- 4 Everyone was _____ after the prime minister suddenly resigned.
- 5 "Bill Gates helps finance many charities." "I know, he's a true _____."
- 6 "He's too weak to tell you the truth." "I know, he's completely _____."
- 7 The politicians promised that everybody would _____ if they were elected.
- 8 Karl _____ of university because he didn't like the course.

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Teacher's notes

Total pages 3 / student pages 2 / week of 21.05.07 / intermediate+

Headlines:

Italians hark back to the days of Futurism

Rothko's White Centre tops a night of art market history

Paragraphs - F = Italians hark... R = Rothko....

1-F 2-R 3-F 4-F 5-R 6-F 7-R 8-F 9-R 10-R 11-F 12-R

Vocabulary focus

1 vogue 2 string 3 auction 4 reeling 5 philanthropist 6 spineless 7 benefit 8 dropped out

Follow-up activity Discuss what the students think of these other paintings that were sold at the same auction.



Peter Doig
£1.8 million



Francis Bacon
£26.6 million