

**SOHO'S CENTER FOR ITALIAN MODERN ART (CIMA) ANNOUNCES NEW EXHIBITION:
*FROM DEPERO TO ROTELLA: ITALIAN COMMERCIAL POSTERS BETWEEN
ADVERTISING AND ART***

FEBRUARY 16TH - JUNE 10TH, 2023

CURATED BY CIMA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NICOLA LUCCHI



GiVi (Giuseppe Vincenti) | *Watt Radio* 1931 | Stabilimento Poligrafico Roggero & Tortia, Torino | chromolithograph on paper | 99.8 x 70.6 cm | Direzione Regionale Musei Veneto - Museo Collezione Salce Treviso. Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura

Today, the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) announces a new exhibition “From Depero to Rotella: Italian Commercial Posters Between Advertising and Art” from February 16th to June 10th, 2023 at its Soho exhibition and research center. The show examines the cross-pollination between avant-garde art and commercial posters in Italy, with a particular focus on the interwar years and the early post-World War II era, during the country’s economic boom.

Nicola Lucchi, curator of the exhibition, explains that “while poster art has often been described as derivative in character, the show will demonstrate how, from Futurism onwards, Italian posters acquired a visual and communicative force that elevated the medium to a form of artistic expression in its own right, pushing the boundaries of lithographic techniques, photomontage, and typography. The commercial posters’ peculiar ambition to deliver alluring forms and contents to the masses, rather than to an elite circle, also make them an object of socioeconomic and philosophical interest”.

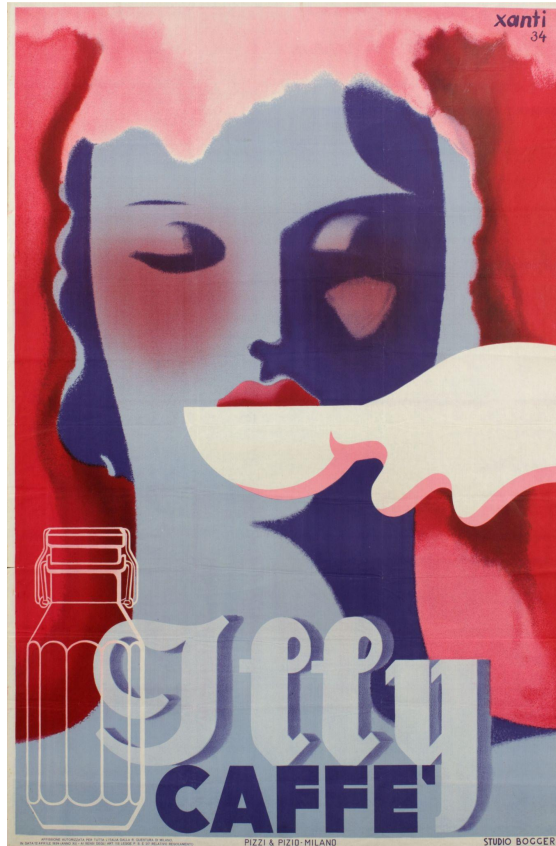
With a starting date in 1926 (the year in which Depero exhibited the Venice Biennale a “quadro pubblicitario”, *Squisito al selz*) and an ideal closing date in 1957 (the year in which the television advertising show *Carosello* first aired on Italy’s public tv network RAI), the exhibition illustrates how the design of Italian commercial posters moved hand in hand with the artistic currents of its times.

The exhibition includes over 30 posters from major Italian institutions and corporate collections, as well as a few select private collections in the United States. Among the artists featured: Erberto Carboni, Fortunato Depero, Nikolai Diulgheroff, Lucio Fontana, Max Huber, Bruno Munari, Marcello Nizzoli, Bob Noorda, Giovanni Pintori, Xanti Schawinsky, Mario Sironi, and Albe Steiner. The works of these individuals illustrated the products of companies that made the history of the Italian economy, such as Barilla, Campari, Olivetti, Fiat, Pirelli.

As a visual and conceptual counterpoint to the narrative path traced by the commercial posters, the exhibition also includes a few artworks by Mimmo Rotella. An artist in the traditional sense of the word, Rotella’s *décollages* and *retro d’affiches* turn the medium of the commercial poster onto itself, in a gesture of critique and self-reflection.



Enrico Prampolini | *Théâtre Champs-Élysées. Opéra Italien*, 1929 | lithograph on paper mounted on linen | 28 1/2 x 23 in (72.4 x 58.4 cm) | Merrill C. Berman Collection



Xanti (Alexander) Schawinsky | *Illy Caffè*, 1934 | lithograph on paper | 55 1/8 x 39 1/2 in (140 x 100.3 cm) | Merrill C. Berman Collection

The exhibition is curated by CIMA Executive Director Nicola Lucchi and themes of the show will extend both to CIMA's robust slate of public programs and to events, including lectures, concerts, screenings, and activities for students. Details of public programs will be announced in the coming weeks. CIMA's exhibitions result from the curator's deep knowledge of the selected topic, but also function as a catalyst for new research by CIMA's international fellows who gain and share new insights on the show's themes with the public.

The fellows' research will be included in CIMA's accredited academic online journal, *Italian Modern Art* following the exhibition's run (www.italianmodernart.org/journal). CIMA's international fellows for *From Depero to Rotella: Italian Commercial Posters Between Advertising and Art* will be Giorgio Di Domenico and Marcella Martin.

The exhibition is open to the public on Fridays with guided tours at 11am, 2pm and 6pm, and Saturdays, 11am to 6pm at CIMA (421 Broome Street, 4th floor, New York, New York, 10013)



Mario Sironi | *L'Ambrosiano Edizione del Pomeriggio*, 1934 | Off. G. Ricordi & C., Milano | lithograph backed on linen | internationalposter.com, Boston MA



Mimmo Rotella | *Arachidina*, 1963 | *décollage* on canvas | 54 3/8 x 37 1/2 in (138 x 95.3 cm) | Courtesy of Robilant+Voena

ABOUT CIMA:

Founded in 2013, CIMA is a public non-profit dedicated to presenting modern and contemporary Italian art to international audiences. Through critically acclaimed exhibitions—many of them bringing work to U.S. audiences for the first time—along with a wide variety of public programs and substantial support for new scholarship awarded through its international fellowship program, CIMA situates Italian modern art in an expansive historic and cultural context, illuminating its continuing relevance to contemporary culture and serving as an incubator of curatorial ideas for larger cultural institutions. CIMA works to add new voices to scholarship on modern Italian art with annual fellowships that open fresh perspectives and new avenues of research. A visit begins with a complimentary espresso, followed by an informal exhibition tour with one of the resident fellows. Visitors are welcome to linger for additional viewing and conversation.

ABOUT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NICOLA LUCCHI:

Nicola Lucchi is the Executive Director of the Center for Italian Modern Art; he oversees the institution's fellowship program, the calendar of cultural events, and serves as Managing Editor for the Center's online scholarly journal. Prior to joining CIMA, Nicola worked as Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian at Dickinson College and Lecturer of Italian at CUNY's Queens College. He has published scholarly articles, book chapters and catalog essays on Futurism, on the relationship between poetry and the visual arts, and on Bruno Munari, in the scholarly volume *Bruno Munari. The Lightness of Art*. He has also curated an exhibition on Futurist manifestos and ephemera at Queens College's Rosenthal Library, and on propaganda art in Italy at NYU's Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò. He received a PhD in Italian Studies from NYU in 2016.

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