

CONTENTS

Foreword	vi
Acknowledgements	viii

PART I INTRODUCTION

1. Futurist Theatre: A Preliminary Characterization	3
The modernist revolution in Italy 3; Futurism and the performing arts 6	
2. The State of Italian Theatre Before the Advent of Futurism	11
Playhouses and touring companies 11; The star system and its effect on playwriting 14; The first art theatres 18; Dramatic art at the turn of the century 19	
3. Marinetti's Early Writings and Aesthetics: A Prelude to Futurism	26
Upbringing in Egypt and studies in Paris 26; Early literary and critical writings 28; The art of declamation 31; <i>Poupées électriques</i> in Turin 32; The Paris performances of <i>Le Roi Bombance</i> 35	
4. The Founding of the Futurist Movement and the First Manifestos	43
<i>The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism</i> 43; <i>Let's Murder the Moonlight</i> 49; <i>Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine</i> 51; <i>Against the Professors</i> 52	

PART II THE BIRTH OF A FUTURIST THEATRE

1. Political Action Theatre as a Performative Genre	59
The Futurist political programme, 1909–1914 60; Futurist engagement in anarchist, syndicalist, and socialist circles 65; Futurist political action theatre 68; Summary 78	
2. The Beginnings of a Futurist Performance Art: The Early Serate	85
Politeama Rossetti in Trieste, 12 January 1910 86; Teatro Lirico in Milan, 15 February 1910 91; Politeama Chiarella in Turin, 8 March 1910 97; Teatro Mercadante in Naples, 20 April 1910 99; Venice and Padua, 1 and 3 August 1910 102; The serate of 1911 104; Teatro Costanzi in Rome, 21 February and 9 March 1913 111; Teatro Storchi in Modena, 2 June 1913 118; Teatro Verdi in Florence, 12 December 1913 122; Teatro dal Verme in Milan, 21 April 1914 128; Summary and general characterization of the serate 133	
3. Futurist Dramatic Theory: The Early Manifestos	156
→ <i>The Pleasure of Being Boomed</i> 157; <i>The Variety Theatre Manifesto</i> 161	

4. Futurism and the Professional Theatre: The First Companies Touring with a Futurist Repertoire 187

Tumiati's tour with *Elettricità* (1913) 187; The first *Teatro Sintetico* tour of the Berti-Masi Company (1915) 193; Theatre in World War I 197; Plans for a Futurist musical theatre and a touring circus 201; Collaboration with Molinari, Petrolini, and Spadaro 204; Postwar revival of Synthetic Theatre 209; Summary 215

5. Theatre Performances in Art Galleries 232

The Sprovieri Gallery in Rome 233; The first 'Futurist Afternoons' 234; General characterization of the 'Futurist Afternoons' 240

6. The Stage Works of Giacomo Balla 246

Balla's first involvement with Futurism 246; Contributions to the 'Futurist Afternoons' and early stage works 249; *Feu d'artifice* 253

7. Enrico Prampolini's Early Futurist Career 264

The manifestos of 1913–1915 265; Attempts to be admitted to the Futurist Circle 268; *Futurist Scenography and Choreography* and first stage designs 270; Prampolini and the Ballets Russes 277; Podrecca and the Teatro dei Piccoli 279; *Matoum et Téviabar* 280

8. Fortunato Depero's Theatrical Experiments of the 1910s 291

The Plastic Complexes (1914–1916) 293; *Mimismagia* and *Colori* 297; The Ballets Russes and *Le Chant du Rossignol* 300; *Il giardino zoologico* 306; *I balli plastici* 309; Towards a Magic Theatre (1919–1920) 316

PART III THE SECOND FUTURIST MOVEMENT, 1920–1930

1. Futurism under the Fascist Régime 329

Political alliances of the postwar period 330; Futurist accommodation with Mussolini's régime 333; Marginalization of Futurism under the Fascist régime 335; Futurist survival tactics in the developed Fascist State 338

2. The Revival of Futurist Theatre in the 1920s 346

Ricciardi's Teatro del Colore 347; Sicilian proposals for a new theatre 357; The Theatre of Surprise 359; Tactile Theatre 364; Second tour of the Theatre of Surprise: *Il Nuovo Teatro Futurista* 366; Independent touring companies 369; Masnata's Visionic Theatre 372

3. Futurist Cabarets, Artists' Festivals, and Banquets 384

Balla's Bal Tic Tac 385; Bragaglia's Gallina a Tre Zampe and Cabaret degli Indipendenti 386; Depero's Cabaret Diavolo and *Veglia futurista* 388; Futurist banquets 392

4. From the Religion of Speed to the Cult of the Machine 396

Marinetti and the birth of modernity 396; Futurism as a cure, an initiation rite, and a spiritual journey 398; Early Futurist aesthetics of time and space 400

The machine aesthetics of the 1920s and its sources 401; The fusion of man and machine and the return to a 'Womb of Steel' 403; The spectrum of Futurist attitudes towards the machine 406; Futurist machine aesthetics in the theatre 408

5. The Machine Art of Vinicio Paladini and Ivo Pannaggi	417
Paladini's attempt at reconciling the political and artistic avant-garde 417; Pannaggi's critical involvement with the Futurist movement 419; The <i>Manifesto of Futurist Mechanical Art</i> and the <i>Mechanical Ballet</i> 422; Paladini's stunted career 426	
6. Fillia's Theatrical Experiments of the 1920s	431
Founding of the Futurist Syndicate and the serate in Turin 431; Theories of mechanical art and the plays <i>Sensualità</i> , <i>Adulterio futurista</i> , and <i>Il sesso di metallo</i> 432; Stage designs and the Teatro Novatore 437	
7. Enrico Prampolini's Theatrical Career in the 1920s	442
New manifestos of the early 1920s 442; The Magnetic Theatre 444; Mechanical dances and other theatre projects 447; <i>Théâtre de la Pantomime Futuriste</i> 449	
8. Fortunato Depero's Contribution to a Futurist Mechanical Theatre	469
Between <i>macchinismo</i> and <i>New Fantasy</i> 469; <i>Anihccam del 3000</i> and other dance scenarios 471; The 'Great Babel' of New York 475	
9. Fedele Azari and Futurist Aerial Theatre	485
Azari and the beginnings of civil aviation 485; The <i>Manifesto of Aerial Theatre</i> and the first aerial spectacles 487; <i>Aerovita</i> and <i>Aeropittura</i> 490	
10. Vasari's Apocalyptic Vision of the Futurist Machine Age	495
<i>Angoscia delle macchine</i> 495; Vasari's early life, plays, and activities in Germany 501; <i>Angoscia delle macchine</i> in Berlin and Paris 504; <i>Raun</i> 508	

PART IV EPILOGUE: FUTURISM IN THE 1930s AND 1940s

1. Futurism Tied to the Procrustean Bed of the Fascist State	523
Artistic <i>Gleichschaltung</i> through the Ministry of Popular Culture 523; <i>Aeropittura</i> 526; The anti-Futurist campaign of Italian Hitlerites 528	
2. The Last Signs of Life in Futurist Theatre	534
Futurist attempts to improve the Fascist theatre system 534; Theatre architecture 536; Playwriting 541; The last theatre manifestos, campaigns, and performances 544	

Bibliography	555
List of Illustrations	577
Index	583