

Domenico (Mino) DELLE SITE (Lecce 1914 - Rome 1996)

Aeropittura (Aeropainting)

Watercolour, with touches of silver pen, with framing lines in green ink, on paper laid down onto a black card (the cover of a notebook?).

Signed with monogram, inscribed and dated *DSte FUTURISTA* / *1932* / *LF* / *X* in white gouache on the backing card, below the image.

Titled *AERO* / *PITTURA* on a separate sheet of paper cut out and pasted onto the lower right of the image.

Further inscribed *Delle Site Domenico* / *Alunno 4oCorso* on the backing card.

93 x 103 mm. (3 5/8 x 4 1/8 in.) [image, at greatest dimensions].

241 x 175 mm. (9 1/2 x 67/8 in.) [backing card]

In September 1929 the Futurist theorist and founder Filippo Tomasso Marinetti published an article entitled 'Perspectives of Flight and Aeropainting' in the Gazzetta del Popolo in Turin, signed by Giacomo Balla, Fortunato Depero, Enrico Prampolini and several other Futurist painters. Republished in a revised and more complete version in 1931, the text served as a manifesto of the nascent branch of Futurism known as aeropittura, or Futurist aeropainting:

'We Futurists declare that: 1. The changing perspectives of flight are an absolutely new reality that has nothing to do with the traditional reality of terrestrial perspectives. 2. The elements of this new reality have no fixed point and are built out of the same perennial mobility. 3. The painter cannot observe and

paint unless he experiences the same speed as these elements. 4. Painting this new reality from the air imposes a profound contempt for detail and a need to summarize and transfigure everything…7. Every aeropainting simultaneously contains the dual movement of the plane and the hand of the painter as he moves his pencil, brush or diffuser…

We Futurists declare that the principle of aerial perspectives and consequently the principle of Aeropainting is an incessant, graded multiplication of forms and colors with extremely elastic crescendos and diminuendos, which intensify and scatter to give birth to new gradations of form and colour...In this way, we outline the dominant features of Aeropainting which, by means of an absolute freedom of fantasy and an obsessive desire to embrace the dynamic multiplicity with the most indispensable of syntheses, will fix in place the immense visionary and sensitive drama of flight.'

This watercolour is pasted down onto what appears to be the cover of a small notebook with black pages. It is part of a series of small-scale watercolours of aeronautical subjects, drawn between 1931 and 1932, with such titles as Stormo, Aeronautica, Volo, Sintesi atmosferica, Eliche, Squadriglia veloce – Volo, Aeroporto and Madonna dell'aria. Most of these watercolours, including the three sheets here exhibited, appear to have been originally part of the same notebook.

Exhibitions

Bari, Castello Svevo and Taranto, Castello Aragonese, *Verso le avanguardie: Gli anni del Futurismo in Puglia 1909-1944*, 1998; Warsaw, Wloski Instytut Kultury, and Cracow, *Mino Delle Site: Alle Radici dell'Aeropittura 1931-1934*, 2001, no.8; Rome, Aeroporto Leonardo da Vinci, Sala Club Freccia Alata, *Mino Delle Site*, 2003-2004; Salerno, Pinacoteca Provinciale, *Percorsi d'arte: Dal collezionismo dei Ruffo all'evoluzione pittorica di Mino Delle Site*, 2005; Lecce, Museo Provinciale 'S. Castromediano', *Mino Delle Site*, 2006, no.80.

Literature:

Gino Agnese, 'Incontri con Delle Site', in Giuseppe Appella, ed., *Verso le avanguardie: Gli anni del Futurismo in Puglia 1909-1944*, exhibition catalogue, Bari and Taranto, 1998, illustrated p.342; Renato Miracco, ed., *Mino Delle Site: Alle Radici dell'Aeropittura 1931-1934*, exhibition catalogue, Warsaw and Cracow, 2001, illustrated p.20; Antonio Lucio Giannone, 'Itinerario di Mino Delle Site', in Antonio Lucio Giannone, ed., 'L'evoluzione pittorica di di Mino Delle Site', Cavallino, Convento di San Domenico and Salerno, Pinacoteca Provinciale, *Percorsi d'arte: Dal collezionismo dei Ruffo all'evoluzione pittorica di Mino Delle Site*, exhibition catalogue, 2005, illustrated p.145; Chiara Letizia Delle Site, ed., *Mino Delle Site*, 2006, illustrated p.54; Domenico Guzzi, *Mino Delle Site: Forme assolute della geometria*, Rome, 2008, illustrated; Chiara Letizia Delle Site, ed., *Centenario Mino Delle Site*, 2014 [e-book], illustrated.

Artist description:

Domenico (known as Mino) Delle Site was one of the youngest members of the second wave of Italian Futurism, and one of the most important exponents of the associated 'Aeropittura' movement. Born in Lecce, at the age of twelve he enrolled in the local art school, having already been employed as an engraver for a small school newspaper, and he continued to earn commercial commissions for his linocuts and prints throughout his studies in Lecce under the painter Geremia Re. In 1930, at the age of sixteen, Delle Site moved to Rome to complete his artistic education at an art college and at the Accademia di Belle Arti. Delle Site joined the nascent Futurist 'aeropainting' movement in 1931, while still a student, not long after visiting the exhibition Prima Mostra di Aeropittura – Omaggio futurista ai trasvolatori in Rome, and developing links with the Futurist painter Enrico Prampolini and the photographer and art dealer Anton Giulio Bragaglia.

In December 1932 an exhibition of Delle Site's work was held at Bragaglia's gallery in Rome, followed two months later by another solo exhibition in the artist's native Lecce. Delle Site also took part in the exhibition Omaggio futurista a Umberto Boccioni at the Galleria Pesaro in Milan in 1933, as well as the Prima Mostra Nazionale d'arte futurista in Rome later the same year. Paintings by Delle Site were included in the Futurist section of the Quadriennale d'arte nazionale exhibitions in Rome in 1935 and 1939, as well as the Venice Biennale of 1938. In later years Delle Site produced a number of striking designs for travel posters, but by the 1950s his work had become almost fully abstract. In 1956 a solo exhibition of Delle Site's work was mounted at the Galleria delle Carrozze in Rome, while a retrospective exhibition, containing works dating from 1932 to 1965, was held at the Rizzoli Galleria in New York in 1965. Another major retrospective exhibition was held in his native Lecce in 1989, while Delle Site's work was also featured in several important exhibitions of Futurist painting in the 1980s and 1990s. The artist died in Rome in 1996.