



174/220

Umberto Boccioni

GINO SEVERINI (1883-1966)**Composition (The Football)**

Signed in pencil, lower right, "Severini" and editioned in pencil, lower left, "174/220"
original lithograph

22 x 14 7/8 in.

174/220

1955

27927

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, California

Gino Severini (1883-1966) was an Italian painter and a leading member of the Futurist movement. For much of his life he divided his time between Paris and Rome. He was associated with neo-classicism and the "return to order" in the decade after the First World War. During his career he worked in a variety of media, including mosaic and fresco. He showed his work at major exhibitions, including the Rome Quadrennial, and won art prizes from major institutions. In 1900 he met the painter Umberto Boccioni. Together they visited the studio of Giacomo Balla, where they were introduced to the technique of Divisionism, painting with divided rather than mixed color and breaking the painted surface into a field of stippled dots and stripes. The ideas of Divisionism had a great influence on Severini's early work and on Futurist painting from 1910 to 1911. He was invited by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Boccioni to join the Futurist movement and was a co-signatory, with Balla, Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Luigi Russolo, of the Manifesto of the Futurist Painters in February 1910 and the Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting in April the same year. He was an important link between artists in France and Italy and came into contact with Cubism before his Futurist colleagues. Severini was less attracted to the subject of the machine than his fellow Futurists and frequently chose the form of the dancer to express Futurist theories of dynamism in art. In 1916 Severini departed from Futurism and painted several works in a naturalistic style inspired by his interest in early Renaissance art. After the First World War, Severini gradually abandoned the Futurist style and painted in a Synthetic Cubist style until 1920.

In the 1940s Severini's style became semi-abstract. In the 1950s he returned to his Futurist subjects: dancers, light and movement. He executed commissions for the church of Saint-Pierre in Freiburg and inaugurated the *Consegna delle Chiavi* ("Delivery of the Keys") mosaic. His mosaics were shown at the Cahiers d'Art gallery in Paris and he participated in a conference on the history of mosaic at Ravenna. He received commissions to decorate the offices of KLM in Rome and Alitalia in Paris and took part in the exhibition *The Futurists, Balla - Severini 1912-1918* at the Rose Fried Gallery in New York. In Rome he reconstructed his *Pan Pan Dance* mosaic, which had been destroyed in the war. He was awarded the Premio Nazionale di Pittura of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome, exhibited at the 9th Rome Quadrennial and was given a solo exhibition at the Accademia di San Luca. Throughout his career he published important theoretical essays and books on art.

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