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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	DCM	VI.B.7

DM - FYI

Balla

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO • ILLINOIS 60637

DEPARTMENT OF ART

1050 EAST 59TH STREET

MIDWAY STUDIOS

EPSTEIN ARCHIVE

15 December 1968

Dear Betsy Jones:

Thank you for sending along the photograph of the little Balla Bankruptcy. I had never seen it although I knew of it through a curious reference in Fagiolo dell'Arco's small book on Balla of last year. He says that there are two small unpublished versions.

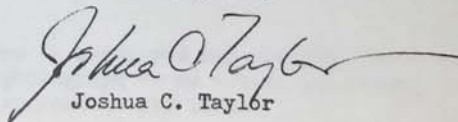
There is no doubt in my mind that the small painting is a copy of the large one, not a study for it. It imitates too exactly the almost accidental forms of the finished version. The graffiti, for example, follow the forms of the final painting and have little to do with the free rhythms of the preliminary drawing.

I have no doubt that the painting is by Balla, but when he did it is another question. The color might give some clue, and I hope I may see the painting in New York late in January or in February. He might have done it early either as a record or for publication. On the other hand, it is just as likely that he did it in the 1940's when he was painting again in this manner. It is a pleasant little painting but seems to add nothing in particular to our knowledge of Balla.

Possibly when I can see the painting itself I can be of more help. It is interesting, by the way, that none of the documentation attests to more than Balla's ^{own} ownership. If the painting was done late, the daughters might remember the occasion. But sweet as they are, I would not necessarily accept their word if they vouched for its being early.

With all best regards,

Sincerely yours,


Joshua C. Taylor

Miss Betsy Jones
Painting and Sculpture Department
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York, New York 10019

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Balla

cc: Dorothy Miller

Has sent Adami letter of
29 Jan. 1968

December 6, 1968

Dear Mr. Taylor:

I am enclosing a photograph of a small Balla which we have here on approval. It is, as you see, a rather complete study for the big Bankruptcy.

The picture comes from an Italian source, but we are unable to learn anything about its history, beyond the fact that the previous owner acquired it from an old friend of Balla's who was either a painter or a furniture manufacturer (or perhaps both). Perhaps this is the man whose name is not known to me) who made that Balla bedroom that was shown at the Galleria La Tartaruga in Rome in 1965.

The picture is oil on wood panel, 11 3/4 x 15 5/8" (28.4 x 39.6 cm.). It is inscribed in white paint on the back "Fallimento 1902" whether by the artist or not, we do not know. It has an undated endorsement in ink: "Questo quadro è di mio padre. Luce Balla." In another hand, also in ink, is "Via Veneto, Rome."

I wonder if this painting is known to you. We are particularly anxious to know whether 1902 is the correct date. One Futurist scholar has suggested that it may have been a postscript for the big painting rather than a study -- perhaps done in the forties when Balla saw the big picture again after many years. There is some suggestion that the inscription (of which unfortunately I do not have a photograph) does not date from 1902, although I understand Balla often inscribed works some time after they were painted.

If you would like to see the picture -- since you may not wish to express any opinion on the basis of a photograph -- we would, of course, be happy to show it to you when you next come to New York.

I look forward to having whatever information you might be able to give us.

Sincerely,

Betsy Jones, Associate Curator
Painting and Sculpture

Prof. Joshua C. Taylor
Department of Art
University of Chicago
1050 East 59 Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

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BALLA

DTF

The Museum of Modern

LT

Mrs. Piero Dorazio
34 via di Villa Giulia
Rome, Italy

WUX

VERY IMPORTANT
SORRY CONFUSION BALLAS. STOP OUR ERROR STOP FALLIMENTO IS
ELEVEN AND ONE QUARTER INCHES (28.4 CM) HIGH FIFTEEN AND
FIVE-EIGHTS INCHES (39.6 CM) WIDE STOP THIS IS CORRECT STOP
RENEWED APOLOGIES

ROSEVEAR
MODERNART

Charge: M. C. 555-625

RE July 10, 1968

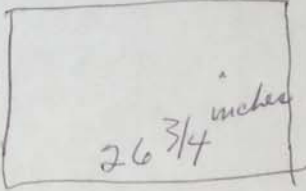
Dear Mrs Rosevear,
 Thank you for the Helicable
 with the dimensions of the (our) Balla
 Fallimento. I am using these - but
 next week I will have the final
 proofs and perhaps I could change
 the measures. The ones you sent
 Miss Nye. The ones as big as I see -
 Registration kept measuring wrong Ballas!
 Remember the painting
 is this correct?? 19" x 26 3/4"
 If not please cable me
 again as is importantissimo!!
 Thank you - Giorgio Arca

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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rec'd
7-9-68

VIA DI VILLA GIULIA 34 ROMA

Dear Miss Rosevear,

Thank you for the Haleable
with the dimensions of the (our) Balla
Fallimento. I am using these - but
next week I will have the final
proofs and perhaps I could change
the measures. The ones you sent
seem much too big as I re-
member the painting. 
Do this correct??

If not please cable me
again as is importantissimo!!
Thank you - Virginia Donazio

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BALLA

DTF
LT

Museum of Modern Art

Mrs. Piero Dorazio
34 via di Villa Giulia
Rome, Italy

WUX

CORRECT FALLIMENTO DIMENSIONS TO 26-3/4 by 19 INCHES

67.6 by 48.2 CM.

ROSEVEAR
MODERNART

Charge M.C. 555-625

July 2, 1968

DCM - Registration made + mistake,
then realized it
CR

No.

Ma
26 3/4 x 19
67.6 x 48.2

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CALLA

DTF
 LT
 Mrs. Piero Dorazio
 34 via di Villa Giulia
 Rome, Italy

Prepaid

WUX

BALLA FALLIMENTO DIMENSIONS 25 1/4 x 27 5/8 inches
 63.8 x 70.2 cm irreg

alla

~~26 3/4 x 19~~

~~67.6 x 48.2~~

No.

ROSEVEAR
 MODERN ART

July 2, 1968

Photograph
 or photographed
 Special Delivery
 sent by the

By mail.

Forward
 by Miss Miller

VIA ITALIA VIA ITA

NEW YORK NY 10017

NEW YORK NY 10017

NEW YORK NY 10017

CASA TOSCANI MONTENA PT NEW YORK

DIMENSIONE BALLA FALLIMENTO URGENT

URGENT

ITT World Communications

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BALLA

DTF
LT
Mrs. Piero Dorazio
34 via di Villa Giulia
Rome, Italy

Prepaid

WUX

BALLA FALLIMENTO DIMENSIONS 25 1/4 x 27 5/8 inches
63.8 x 70.2 cm irreg

ROSEVEAR
MODERN ART

1968 JUL 1 10 9 47

Charge: Prepaid

July 2, 1968

3070 NW ROBERTO FIGUEROA 17111 VIA ITALIA 111

040 CO ITEM 040

1223 12 1 1223

157 01.01.57

NEW YORK NY 10016

URGENT FALLIMENTO BALLA DIMENSIONS

photograph
is photographed
Special Delivery
sent by the

By your,

to Miss Miller

ITT World Communications

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RCA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
A RADIO SERVICE OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

Balla

COL ROSEVEAR
PHOTOGRAPH FALL I
VIRGINIA DE
CORA ROSEVEAR
MODERNART NEWYOR
ROMA 9 13 1223
URNY CO ITRM 010
ZCZC RBA511 R
NNNN

ITT World Communicati

NY Phone Serv:Telegr. 797-3311/Mandg. 7522/Infor. 7550/Telex 7590

ZCZC RBA511 VIA ITT XKI113 FT0016 ROB880 FTC2171 3070 NW
UIRB CO ITRM 010
ROMA 10 1 1223
RPDLRS3.67
CORA ROSEVEAR MODERNART NEWYORK
DIMENSIONS BALLA FALLIMENTO URGENT
DORAZIO
NNNN

1968 JUL 1 AM 9 47

RCA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
A RADIO SERVICE OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

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RCA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

A GLOBAL SERVICE OF BELL CORPORATION OF AMERICA

RECEIVED 5/13/68 11 11A 078

Balla

COL ROSEVEAR

VIRGINIA DORAZIO

PHOTOGRAPH FALLIMENTO URGENTISSIMO

MODEMONT MONTON

CORA ROSEVEAR

ROMA 9 13 1850

URNY CO ITRM GDS 01555578

ICZC RRG0094 RMO340 ITC499 FICR500 309

NNNN

May 13, 1968

Dear Mrs. Dorazio:

I have just today received the photograph of the Balla "Il Fallimento" which has been photographed for you. I send it herewith by Air Mail Special Delivery and hope that you have not been inconvenienced by the delay in getting it to you.

Sincerely yours,

Cora Rosevear
Secretary to Miss Miller

Mrs. Piero Dorazio
34, via di Villa Giulia
Roma Italy

EOCL.

Dear Miss Miller

I now have the photograph for her. I can send them with a simple letter, or do you want to reply to the card about Mr. Dorazio now being sure about getting the work?

MAY 13 1968

RCA



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A GLOBAL SERVICE OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA.
60 BROAD STREET, N.Y. TEL. 363-2121



INC.
AMERICA.

NNNN
ZCZC RXB
URNY CO I
ROMA 9 13

CORA ROSEVEAR
MODERNART NEWYORK

PHOTOGRAPH FALLIMENTO URGENTISSIMO
VIRGINIA DORAZIO

COL ROSEVEAR

Dear Miss Miller:

I now have the photograph for her. I can send ~~them~~ with a simple letter, or do you want to reply to the part ^(in her letter) about Mr. Dorazio now being unsure about selling the work?

STANDARD TIME
10 53 AM '60

RCA COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
A GLOBAL SERVICE OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA.
60 BROAD STREET, N.Y. TEL. 363-2121



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REPLY VIA RCA
FOR MOST ACCURATE DIRECT

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NNNN

ZCZC RXB0054 RM0340 ITC499 FTC2300 3093

URNY CO ITRM 009 01555570

ROMA 9 13 1350

CORA ROSEVEAR

MODERNART NEWYORK

PHOTOGRAPH FALLIMENTO URGENTISSIMO

VIRGINIA DORAZIO

COL ROSEVEAR

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60 BROAD STREET, N.Y. TEL. 363-2121



INC.
AMERICA.

STANDARD TIME

MAY 13 10 53 AM '60

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April 15, 1968

Dear Mrs. Dorazio:

Thank you for your letter of April 8 which has arrived in Miss Miller's absence from the Museum. I will bring it to her attention when she returns to the office in early May.

We do not at the moment have a photograph of the Balla "Il Fallimento", but I have requested that one be made and I will send it to you as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

Cora Rosevear
Secretary to Miss Miller

Mrs. Piero Dorazio
3h, via di Villa Giulia
Rome, Italy

*Dear Mrs. Miller, Piero Dorazio
has requested that I write you
a photograph of 'Il Fallimento'
about Balla being published
this summer and I will
bring it to her attention when she returns
in early May. He also said that he is not
sure that he wants a full
page. Please my
note. With many thanks,
Very best wishes, Virginia Rosevear*

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STAFF

April 8, 1968

rec. d 4.12.68

Dear Miss Miller,

My husband, Piero Dorazio
has suggested that I write you
for a photograph of "H Fallimento",
di Giacomo Balla. My book
about Balla is being published
this summer and I would
like to include this study.
He also said that he is not
sure that he wants to sell
it now. Excuse my brief
note. With many thanks, and
very best wishes, Virginia Dorazio

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SEPARATE REQUISITION
REQUIRED FOR EACH
PHOTOGRAPHER

STAFF

PHOTOGRAPH REQUISITION

11319

DATE NEEDED

NAME

CHARG

PHOTO

BLUE

MUS. C

REGIST

NAME C

ADDRESS

NO. NEG

Balla

TOTALS:

NEGS.

PRINTS

PHOTOSTATS

BLUEPRINTS

1968

AVION AIR MAIL AVION AIR MAIL

MISS DOROTHY WELLS
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
21 WEST 53RD STREET
NEW YORK, 19 NEW YORK

PER VIA AEREA
PAR AVION

AVION AIR MAIL AVION AIR MAIL AVION AIR MAIL AVION AIR MAIL

34 via di Villa Giulia
Roma -

150
POSTE ITALIANE

PIEDRA - FIRENZE - ROMA - VIAREGIO

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SEPARATE REQUISITION
REQUIRED FOR EACH
PHOTOGRAPHER

STAFF
PHOTOGRAPH REQUISITION

11319
DATE NEEDED

NAME Cora Rosevear DEPT. Painting and Sculpture DATE OF REQUEST April 16, 1968

CHARGE TO: 555-680
SPECIFY ACCOUNT WITHIN DEPT.

PHOTOSTAT _____ REPRINTS FROM EXISTING NEGATIVES _____
DESCRIBE BELOW LIST ARTIST, TITLE AND SOURCE BELOW

BLUE PRINTS _____ REG. _____ B & W _____ COPY NEGATIVES _____
DESCRIBE BELOW LIST ARTIST, TITLE AND NEG. NUMBER BELOW

NEW PHOTOS FROM ORIGINAL WORKS OF ART
PERSON REQUESTING WORK MUST FIRST CLEAR PERMISSION
WITH REGISTRAR, MUSEUM COLLECTIONS AND/OR OWNER

MUS. COLL. APPROVAL _____
REGISTRAR'S APPROVAL _____ SCHEDULE BELOW MUST BE ARRANGED WITH PHOTO SERVICE
NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER _____ TO BE TAKEN _____ DATE _____ TIME _____
ADDRESS _____ LOCATION IN MUSEUM _____ SPECIFY _____
NO. NEGS. _____ NO. PRINTS _____ OTHER _____ SPECIFY _____

ARTIST AND TITLE	NEGATIVE NUMBER	FINISH <small>GLOSSY, MATTE, SEMI-MATTE</small>
<u>Balla : "Il Fallimento"</u>	<u>Negative and Master Prints by Jim Mathews</u>	

TOTALS: NEGS. _____ PRINTS _____ PHOTOSTATS _____ BLUEPRINTS _____

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acqs folder *BALLA*

cc: Dorothy Miller ✓ *file*
2 extra

BJ - fine - copy to Rubin & Barreias?
Lowry to?

Piero Dorazio, December 28, 1967

Page two

We certainly sympathize with your wish to have this matter settled. We hope you will be able to send us the information we need soon.

December 28, 1967

With kind regards, from Miss Miller as well as myself, I am,

Dear Mr. Dorazio:

Confirming our telephone conversation today I am sending you a copy of the letter Alfred Barr wrote you on June 4, 1965 asking for specific information about the provenance of the Balla study for Bankruptcy. I am also sending you a copy of your reply of June 24 in which you tell us that you will send us more information. As I mentioned, until your recent letter of October 31, 1967 we had heard nothing since June 1965. I am also enclosing a copy of your May 23, 1965 letter and of the original receipt which the Museum sent you in May of 1965. No doubt you have the original of this in your files in Italy, but since you did not have them with you here and did not remember the price you had put on the picture I thought the copy would be useful.

As I explained, it is really quite important to the Museum to know the history of this picture, particularly since, as you know, one Futurist scholar who saw it suggested that it could be a post-script done many years after the large Fallimento. We have no reason to believe that this is the case, but as an art scholar yourself, you can understand that an institution such as the Museum has a responsibility to its trustees and public for having as complete a history as possible of the works it acquires.

In one of your previous letters you speculated that the Countess Adami did not wish to give the name of the man from whom she bought it because he had been a friend of Balla's and Balla's daughters would be disappointed if they knew he had sold the picture. On the other hand, the Countess Adami did ask them to endorse the painting for her, so it seems probable that they understood it had been sold.

In your recent letter you do tell us something which you had not mentioned before, namely that the owner of the Balla was a furniture manufacturer who owned the bedroom set designed by Balla. In your letter of May 23, 1965 you had described him as a painter. We do know that the bedroom set was shown at the Galleria La Tartaruga in Rome in February of 1965 and we could conceivably get the name and address of the man through them. I think we agreed, however, that there was no real reason why the Countess Adami should not give you or us this information, especially if she understands why it is so important to the Museum.

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Piero Dorazio, December 28, 1967

Page two

N-7. Nov. 24th 1967.

Dear Miss Miller, We certainly sympathize with your wish to have this matter settled. We hope you will be able to send us the information we need soon.

I hope that you have received my letter you had requested concerning With kind regards, from Miss Miller as well as myself, I am,

painting "il Fallimento", the painting I believe about one month ago. Any way you Sincerely yours,

can reply at this new address where I found a studio and am working except Tuesday and Monday Betsy Jones, Associate Curator
The Museum Collections

939. 8th Avenue. Tel. 765 6502

Mr. Piero Dorazio by now quitman - 939 Eighth Avenue - has also written to you New York, New York

Telling me more about the story of the painting. BJ:nk with my very best regards and getting yours sincerely,

Piero Dorazio

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N.Y. Nov. 24th 1967.

rec'd 11-27-67

Dear Miss Miller,

I hope that you have received my letter
you had requested concerning the Ballo
painting "il Fallimento". The I wrote I
believe about one month ago. Any way you
can reply at this new address where I found
a studio and am working every day
except Tuesday and Monday:

noted →
in
cards

939 . 8th Avenue . Tel. 765 5542

I also hope that by now Gianluigi
Romani Adami has also written to you
telling more about the story of the painting.

With my very best regards and greeting
yours sincerely,

MILVO DONATI

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The Museum of Modern Art

To Dorothy Miller

cc: ~~Alfred Barr~~

From Betsy Jones

~~Bill Rubin~~

Date November 6, 1967

Re Balla Study for Bankruptcy

Piero Dorazio's latest letter -- October 31, 1967 -- is more disturbing than helpful.

It is annoying because two years ago (not last year) on June 4, 1965 Alfred wrote to him as follows, in part: "we would like to know to whom Balla first sold it and when, and if possible any documentation available; and then its subsequent history, not to mention the date when it was painted." Dorazio replied on June 24, 1965: "I shall send you more information, in the meantime you can keep the painting. We are in a way forced to sell it but if we cannot sell it we would be glad to keep it as well."

Now, after two years he still has not come up with the answers though he's written a very long letter. Instead he suggests that the original price, which he can't remember precisely, should be raised in view of the passage of time.

I think we should send him copies of all of his and Alfred's letters (also the receipt which gives the price) and point out in our reply that:

1. We are still waiting for the answers to Alfred's questions which he told us he would write about.
2. We do not feel he is right in suggesting an increase in the price in view of the fact that it is only through his own delatoriness that so much time has elapsed since the picture was first offered. As a scholar and teacher he must surely understand our need to have as complete a history as possible of any work we acquire. In view of the fact that a Futurist scholar has already suggested that Study for Bankruptcy may be a postscript done much later than the larger version, it is especially important for the Museum to have full documentation.
3. We are a little puzzled by the Countess Adami's reasons for not revealing the owner's name. In his letter of May 23, 1965 to Alfred he says that she "bought it from an old painter friend of Balla who owned other works by Balla and that he had the painting in his house for many years. She had the painting authenticated and signed in the back by Balla's daughter. She has promised to write a short note on the subject for me, which I shall send you as soon as possible. She says that the original owner would not like it to be known that he sold her the painting because he is afraid that this would upset ~~XX~~ Balla's daughters. I had no time to check all this nor to see this young lady to whom I only spoke on the phone." In his October 31, 1967 letter he speculates that she didn't want to tell because somebody else would then learn about this source

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no - both living
of other interesting works. ~~Of course, Balla's daughters have died in the meantime, so the reason given in the first letter doesn't hold up anymore.~~ I wonder what Balla's daughters thought she was up to when she asked them to authenticate a picture that belonged to an old friend of their father's.

4. He has not sent us the note Countess Adami promised to write.
5. It is not likely that he paid \$5,000 plus one of his own works for it in 1962 when he only asked us \$4,500 in 1965.

The letter is helpful because it tells us that the owner from whom the Countess bought it was the furniture manufacturer who executed the Balla bedroom which was exhibited at the Galeria La Tartaruga in Rome in February 1965. Renée Neu sent us photographs and an announcement about the show. This was all passed on to Connie (from whom we have retrieved it once before). A memo of mine, at the time, however, states that the announcement doesn't give the manufacturer's name though it suggests that it has never left his possession. Of course Dorazio says the Countess owns it. Anyway, we might be able to learn something from the Galeria La Tartaruga or through Renée Neu, if she happens to know the people who run that gallery. Perhaps we could write to the Countess Adami.

I might add that I'm a little puzzled by the price myself. At the May 11, 1965 meeting it was approved in principle at \$4,500. But for reasons unknown I recently put it down as \$5,000. I think maybe \$5,000 would have been the price to Alfred personally, and \$4,500 for the Museum.???

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11-67

Balla - look up letter ^{Dorazio} ~~to~~ wrote a H.P.

- copy to J.T.S.
- Did Dorazio add anything in letter to DEM.
- We sh not pay for his delay in answer to A's request for history
- we sh. buy if J.T.S. agrees.

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Balla

25 1/4 x 27 5/8

63.8 x 70.2 cm

irreg.

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939 \$12 Arl. Balla

N.Y. October 31st, 1967

Dear Miss Miller,

At last I have found a place where to work and where to rest here in N.Y. after an exhausting search. It's right around the corner from your museum at 65th West 55th Street, tel. 2470526,. Now I can sit down and write the Balla's picture story as I know it and my opinion about it, as you have kindly requested I do. The painting was sold to a friend whose name I don't know by Balla in the early teens. This friend had a furniture factory or a carpenter's atelier where they made furniture, He executed for Balla futurist furniture (the girl who sold me the picture owns a very interesting bedroom made after Balla's project. This young lady is Countess Giuliana ROMANI ADAMI, Via Donizetti 36, Milano, she used to be a "painting hunter" at a very young age and she used to visit my studio to show me what she found now and then of some interest, specially early studies or sketches by Boccioni, Severini, Balla, Spadini and other roman painters, knowing of my interest for futurism. I enjoyed looking at these pictures and eventually could advise here about the quality and the authenticity. One day in 1962 she came along with this Balla painting and I flipped over. I had always been curious about this unusual picture (the large version) "Il fallimento" or the "Bankruptcy" painted I believe in 1901 because of its obvious symbolism and realism at the same time drawing the artist's eye on imagery (children marks on a door) which any eye in those days would have completely overlooked. The quality of the painting was remarkable in its post-impressionist technique blended with the Previatis(?) taste and

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this painting as soon as possible and in order to keep it I had to promise that I would eventually find for her a purchaser or else I would buy it myself. After some time the girl called on me asking about the picture and I said that I would buy it since I liked it and had found nobody who would be interested in it. She was asking a quite high price, I ~~XX~~ must confess I could not remember the figure now, I believe about 5 thousand dollars or over ~~£~~ 3 million Liras as the minimum price for me, plus she wanted me to give her a small canvas of mine she had seen in my studio. Morandi's still lifes were selling then for about two and half time this price and I decided that it was reasonable for such a jewel to pay her what she was asking at my convenience. I did buy some prints and later on some paintings when an occasion like this was there, a De Chirico, a Gino Rossi^(?), two Severini's, a Kandinsky watercolor, a Boccioni drawing and some younger artists as well. I happened to like the painting very much and wanted to keep it at least longer than my friend allowed me. I asked her whether she was sure of its market value and whether she had shown it to Balla's daughters. She convinced me of the value and I knew that the Balla's daughters had written on the back their approval. I asked her~~l~~ where she got the painting and she refused to mention the source saying that she had promised these people not to mention that they had sold it by giving their name. I did not insist since I was 100% certain that it was not only authentic but also extraordinary in quality. I imagine that she ~~XXX~~ knew that these same people had some other object she wanted to acquire and might have thought that once given out their name, somebody else would go there and spoil her finds. Anyway she is a reliable enough source and soon or later might reveal the name of

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yours,

(signed) PIERO DORAZIO

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N.Y. October 31st, 1967

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yours,

(signed) PIERO DORAZIO

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cc: Mr. Barr
Dorothy Miller
Betsy Jones

N.Y. October 31st 1967.

rod 11-2-27

Dear Miss Miller,

at last I have found a place where to work and where to rest here in N.Y. after an exhausting search. It's right around the corner from your Museum at 65th West 55th Street, tel. 247 0526. Now I can sit down and write the Balla's picture story as I know it and my opinion about it, as you have kindly requested I do. The painting was sold to a friend whose name I don't know by Balla in the early fifties. This friend had a furniture factory or a carpenter's atelier where they made furniture. He executed for Balla futurist furniture (the girl who sold me the picture owns a very interesting bedroom made after Balla's project). This young lady is Countess Giuliana ROMANI ADAMI, Via Doricetti 36, Milano. She used to be a "painting hunter" at a very young age and she used to visit my studio to show me what she found now and then of some interest, specially early studies or sketches by Boccioni, Severini, Balla, Spadini & other roman painters, knowing of my interest for futurism. I enjoyed looking at these pictures and eventually would advise her about the quality and the authenticity. One day in 1962 she came along with this Balla painting and I flipped over. I had always been curious about this unusual picture (the large version) "Il Gallimento" or the "Bankruptcy" painted I believe in 1901 because of its obvious symbolism and realism at the same time drawing the artist's eye on imagery (children marks on a door) which any eye in those days would have completely overlooked. The quality of the painting was remarkable in its post-impressionist technique blended with the Primitiv's taste and prescriptions as evolved in Italian divisionism. I asked Balla the story of the picture since and he said that he had a studio in Via Piemonte (next to Via Veneto where he lived with his mother when he moved to Rome from Turin), from where the

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would take off daily with his paint box and some wooden panels ²
to paint "en plein air" in Villa Byzantina (the park next door where he
later on spent many years in a studio where I believe Mrs. Margaret Sedain
Burn had a chance to meet him). One day passing in front of a store in
Riva Veneta, on his way back to the studio he saw the doors shut and
scattered by children, with a sign nailed on it declaring the "fallimento
of the firm". He decided to make a painting of this and the next day
started sketching and working on the subject. I did not then under-
stand that he had gone on the spot with his paint box & stools and made
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BALLA

Copy of letter from Piero Dorazio to Mr. Barr dated Rome, June 24, 1965.

Dear Mr. Barr:

I apologize for replying so late to your letter. I was trying to get everything set back in order to spend the summer here since Virginia and our child came back. Rome looks at its best during this time of the year but it takes forever to get something done.

I am glad to hear your conclusion about the Boccioni's Stati d'animo, I was baffled indeed too. As for the small Balla's Bankruptcy, I am waiting for the girl (who sold it to me) to give me as many details as possible in order to put together as much history as possible for the painting. I am afraid I don't quite agree with your Futurist expert advise that the small painting could be a later version of the large one but on the contrary I believe that the small one is the early version Balla painted on the spot on his easel and that from this one he completed the large version. Balla lived in Via Piemonte in those years and went to paint often in Villa Borghese (open air). The Bankrupt store was in Via Veneto, very near Porta Pinciana, one of the main gates to enter Villa Borghese and the closest to his studio. This store still exists (it is now a bookstore and Virginia has a photo of the "bugnato" on the wall and the step exactly like in the painting). I believe that Balla saw the storefront locked and scribbled, was inspired by this peculiar symbolism and painted a sketch on a typical easel size board which he then took home and found good enough to repeat in a larger version. This is one of the reasons which induced me to buy the picture besides the fact that I thought it looked like a very good one.

The price was not at all high but I would say a standard price for a small Balla. Compared to the price of a Morandi or of a Sironi or any of the other Italians I felt it was quite reasonable, considering too that it was painted in 1902.

I shall send you more information, in the meantime you can keep the painting. We are in a way forced to sell it but if we cannot sell it we would be glad to keep it as well.

Thank you again and please remember us to Mrs. Barr. With kindest regards.

Yours,

Piero Dorazio

The picture you are very glad to get Dorazio to give you a history of
 the little picture.
 big picture, but knows it is definitely before 1902 from the presence in a on design
 of that year.

I am actually in
 my study for Balla's
 opinion
 the hand of Balla
 and thinks probably
 that are probably
 the daughter's
 inscription
 of the date of the
 in a on design

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BALLA

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date May 28, 1965

To: Alfred Barr
 From: Betsy Jones

Re: Marianne Martin's opinion
of the Balla study for Fallimento

Marianne Martin thinks that the study for Fallimento may actually be a postscript done by Balla in the forties. She notes that the study has none of the pointillism of the big picture; the graffiti remind her of the kind of line he used in later works. She has been studying his signatures and thinks probably the one on this picture is late, too, but that happens on pictures that are genuinely early. She knows that Balla was very fond of the big picture (as were the daughters) but that he did not see it, except in photograph, for many years. The inscription "Fallimento 1902" she thinks is late, too. She is not certain of the date of the big picture, but knows it is definitely before 1904 from its presence in a catalogue of that year.

She thinks you are very wise to get Dorazio to give you a history of the little picture.

possible. She says that the original owner would not like it to be known that he sold her the painting because he is afraid that this would upset Balla's sister's daughter. I had no time to check all this nor to see this young lady to whom I only spoke on the phone. I hope to be able to send you her note soon. Please remember me with kindest regards to Mrs. Barr. With best wishes for your summer and greetings,

Sincerely yours,

Mario Dorazio

Roma - Piazza Armellini 16.

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Dear Mr. Barr,

(Rec'd June 1)
Rome, May 23rd 1965

I talked yesterday to Mrs. Marinetti about the Boccioni's "stati d'animo" belonging to the Galleria Civica of Milan. She said that they are probably sketches or another version of those she owned, now in the M. of M. A. collection. She has never seen them exhibited in that Milan Museum either, but she will go to Milan shortly and do some research on the subject. She will check a list of the works exhibited after Boccioni's death in Milan by Marinetti in a memorial exhibition of all his main body of production. She assured me that she will write to you promptly.

As for the small Balla's painting "Il fallimento" Mrs. Adami (now that she is married) but Mrs. Giuliana Zucconi Romani (when she sold me the painting) says that she bought it from an old painter friend of Balla who owned other works by Balla and that he had the painting in his house for many years. She had the painting authenticated and signed in the back by Balla's daughter. She has promised to write a short note on the subject for me, which I shall send you as soon as possible. She says that the original owner would not like it to be known that he sold her the painting because he is afraid that this would upset Balla's other daughter. I had no time to check all this nor to see this young lady to whom I only spoke on the phone. I hope to be able to send you her note soon. Please remember me with kindest regards to Mrs. Barr. With best wishes for your summer and greetings,

Sincerely yours,

Mario De Renzi

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BALLA

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Two white copies to be sent to the Registrar 24 hours or more in advance of collection or delivery; 4 days in advance for outgoing foreign shipments.

TO THE REGISTRAR:

Expect from:
 Collect from:
 Deliver to:
 Release to:

Piero Dorazio *Hotel Fourteen*
 (address to follow)
 14 E. 60

DATE May 10, 1965
 on (date): May 9
 at (time):

The following objects: (artist, medium, size)

Value if needed for insurance or invoice

CONFIRMATION - Work brought to Museum by Mr. Barr

Giacomo ^(Study for) ~~Balla~~ Bankruptcy. 1902. Oil on wood. \$4,500.

PURPOSE ~~Offered for sale.~~ For consideration for purchase

CHARGES Collect Prepaid Bill to:

INSURANCE Ours Theirs Charge to:

VIA Railway Express Parcel Post Air Freight Ship
 Messenger: Ours Theirs Truck: Ours Theirs

Department Museum Collections

Signed

P. M. J. Jr.

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cc JTS
Peter Selz

new book ON BALLA
(Dorazio)

Let me know if, however, he would have to see the material
sent as a gift. His address is Brady Ridge Road, New Canaan,
Connecticut, but he is often in town.

Sincerely,

May 24, 1961

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Dear Mrs. Dorazio:

I hope you got back your material on Balla safely.

I was delighted with your layout (except, of course, the bleeding), and hope very much that your book can be published soon, while there is so much interest in Balla and an urgent need for a study of his work.

I expect you already have an invitation to the opening of the Futurist show, but I am enclosing one just in case you should be in New York on that evening.

I was puzzled by the dimensions on the backs of the two photographs of watercolors about which I should like to write Luce Balla, if she is the right sister. On one of the photographs, I read "acquarelle--20.5 x 18cm (base 15.4) studio per compenetrazione iridescenti 1912", and then on the other, "? acquarelle--25 x 19.5 (base 6.8cm) No. 8a ??Com e Luce?? = ?Compenetrations e Luce?". What does "base" mean, with its accompanying figure? Does "Com e Luce" mean "Compenetrations e Luce"? I want to be sure about these before I write.

Also, for our files, I should very much like to have another print of the photo of the drawing showing how the elongated diamond-shaped abstractions were developed from the skirt of a walking woman. Naturally, I would not want to publish this until your book is out, but I should like to have it for my files--whenever it would be convenient to have it made, and of course, at my expense.

I thought over your flattering request that I write a preface for your book. I would like to do so, but I am afraid I must not break a precedent established now almost twenty years. If I start writing prefaces for books not published by the Museum, I should never be able to stop. However, I think that you might ask Mr. James Thrall Soby to write such a preface. He is, as you know, deeply interested in modern Italian painting, and has written a

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Mrs. Dorazio

-2-

lot about it. However, he would have to see the material just as I did. His address is Brushy Ridge Road, New Canaan, Connecticut, but he is often in town.

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mrs. Piero Dorazio
3414 Sansom Street
Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania

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enclosure:

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acquaforte - 20.5 x 18 cm (base 15.4)
studio per Compenetrazione iridescenti 1912

? acquarello - 25 x 19.5 (base 6.8 cm)

No 8a

?? Com e luce ?? =? Compenetrazione e luce?

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Il Fallimento

$11 \frac{1}{4}$ high X $15 \frac{5}{8}$ wide"

(28.4 X 39.6)