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Italian Futurist's Extraordinary House Opens To Public In Rome



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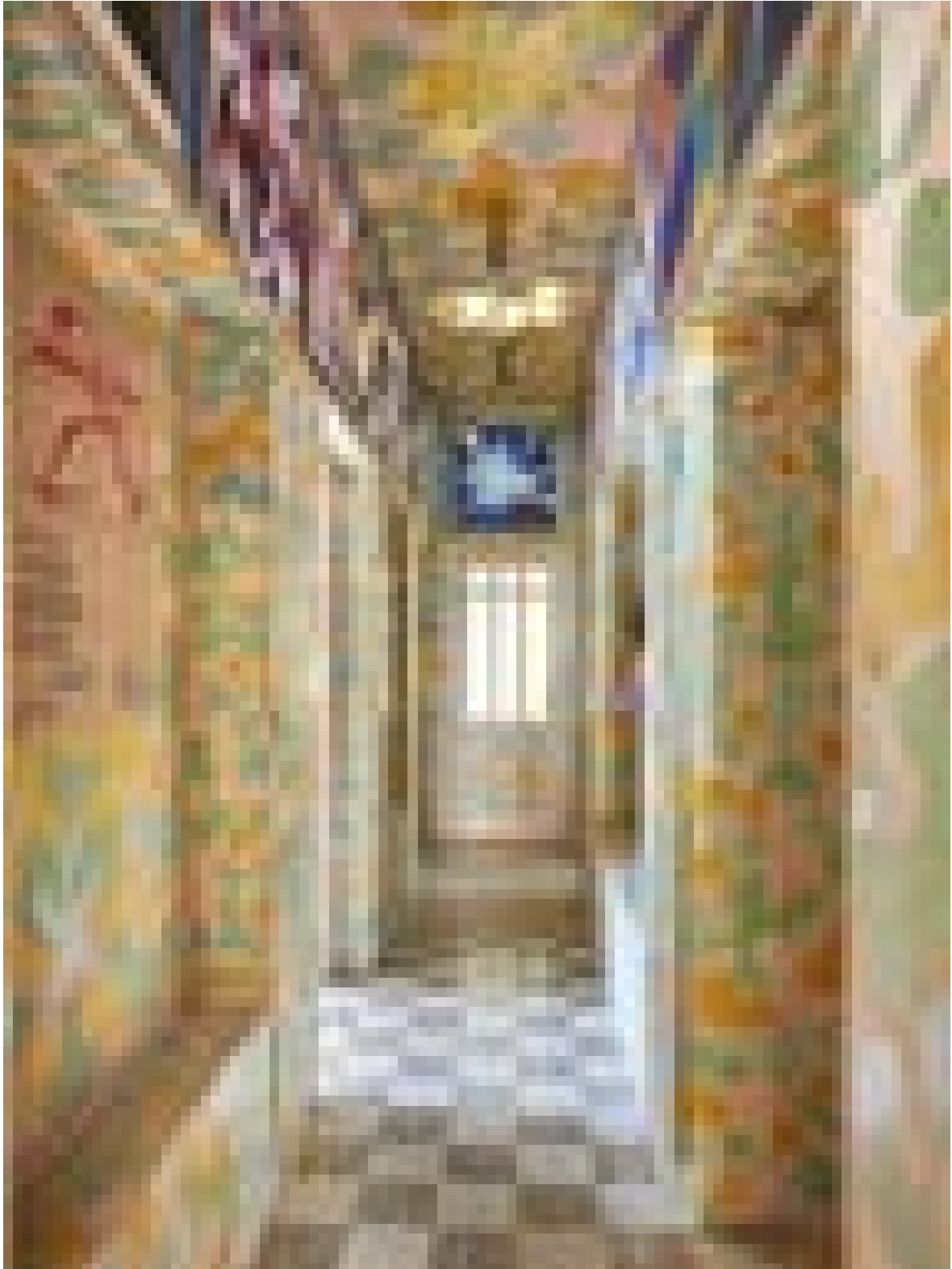
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Luce's room in Casa Balla MAXXI CASA BALLA M3 STUDIO

The home of Italian Futurist Giacomo Balla is set to open its doors for the first time to the public this month. Casa Balla, located in Rome, is an explosion of color and abstract paintings, a three-dimensional expression of the artist's vision. The apartment is accessible after being closed for 30 years thanks to a collaboration between MAXXI, the National Museum of 21st-Century Arts, and Rome's Special Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape.

Casa Balla, located on Via Oslavia, was the artist's family home and a living artwork. Along with help from his wife Elisa and their daughters, Balla transformed the apartment with vivid wall murals, colorful floor tiles and bright, geometric upholstery. The MAXXI museum calls it "A laboratory of experimentation made up of painted walls, a myriad of furniture, furnishings, decorated utensils, numerous paintings and sculptures, clothes he designed and many other objects that together created a unique and kaleidoscopic total project."





The corridor of Casa Balla MAXXI CASA BALLA M3 STUDIO

Domitilla Dardi, the curator of the project, said, “[The house] speaks of the link between art and life: the Balla family’s act of experiencing their own art without interruption is what makes their work a 'diffuse project' that involves paintings as much as dishes, sculptures, furniture, but also the clothes they wore, thereby becoming moving works of art themselves.”

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Balla’s birth, MAXXI has also opened a major exhibition commenting on the artist and his work. “On display are new works conceived and created for the occasion that reflects on the numerous suggestions of Casa Balla, a real piece of art, bringing out the profound topicality of the multifaceted master’s thought,” the gallery said. The exhibition will include applied art, furnishings and drawings originally from Casa Balla and new artworks by contemporary artists and designers.

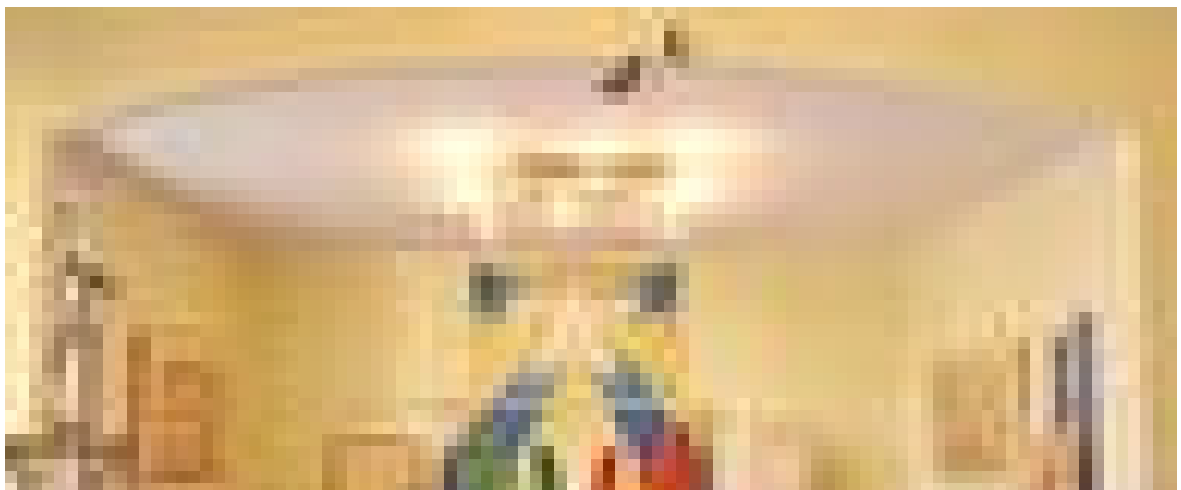
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The living room at Casa Balla MAXXI CASA BALLA M3 STUDIO

Balla was an influential figure in the 20th-century Italian Futurist movement that envisioned art as something to be lived quotidianly, not just reserved to the museum space. After forming a friendship with other young, passionate artists, Balla and the group began exploring the use of abstraction to capture the intangible ideas of light, movement and speed. In 1909, artist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti founded the Futurist movement through the first of many powerful manifestoes.

Part of the Futurist philosophy was the importance of exploring artistic creativity in all forms of society, from politics to food. Balla's house is a microcosm of this notion, with everything from kitchen crockery to mens' jackets exuding his intertwining abstract designs. Notably, Balla was not fascinated by machines and violence like some of the other Futurists. Instead, his works are airy and whimsical, playing optical games. He was influenced by Cubism and the photography of Eadweard Muybridge in his endeavors to capture progression and movement in his artworks.





Clothing designed by Giacomo Balla at Casa Balla MAXXI CASA BALLA M3 STUDIO

Balla died in 1958 but his daughters, Luce e Elica, continued to live in the family house until their deaths in the 1990s. After becoming a protected heritage site in 2004, work on opening the house as a public exhibition began 2019 when MAXXI and Rome's Special Superintendence began their collaboration with support from Banca d'Italia and the Ministry of Culture.

Balla's home will be open on weekends starting from June 25 — reservations can be made via the [MAXXI website](#) — and the MAXXI gallery show opened on June 17. Both exhibition locations will remain open until 21 November.

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