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Nevertheless, Faith is in the Air

**A treatise on existence of true faith
in the 21st century via analysis of
seven artworks from the collection
of Moderna Museet**

Nevertheless, Faith is in the Air

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Let us become mystics of art

One love alone is still allowed us, that of works of art. Let us, therefore, fling ourselves upon this last plank of salvation. Let us become mystics of art.

—Albert Aurier, 'Foundations of Modern Art'

These words of Albert Aurier echo from an epoch in which economic, political, social and technological models were undergoing unprecedented and irrevocable change. In tandem, great advancements were being made in scientific and philosophical realms, inadvertently contributing toward an abandonment of the structure and the purpose of organised religion. This shift away from inherited religious allegiances was not, however, symptomatic of a waning of devotional faith. Rather, the atmosphere of the early 20th century was ripe for the emergence and embracement of new doctrines, many of which were founded upon the elements of 19th-century metaphysical movements.

While art was not then and cannot now be a substitute for proscriptive religion, it can be a fountain of meaning and a mode of communication capable of elevating us above the void of a faithless existence. The investigation, contemplation, realisation and dissemination of art are integral aspects of the vocation to which we devote ourselves. Devotion reveals a new world to us in regard to our everyday life and enlivens us with a vitality of spirit that enables us to surge fervently forward into a future — or at least to sublimate our multifarious anxieties in the attempt. Delusional and utopian we may well be, but an aspirational and enraptured present is infinitely preferable to capitulation. Though we do not desire to turn back the tide of time or to live in the past, it seems that — in order for us to maintain faith — we must partially avert our awareness of certain defining facets of the material world and focus our minds on cultivating that which was planted in man for a high moral purpose. It is this faith that is

necessary for one's spiritual growth and for the development of one's character. This faith is the potent influence that leads one onward and upward on the path to the highest endeavour.

Using methods of investigative research to critique and reflect on seven artworks, this pamphlet will reveal the presence of a utopian impulse within the Modernist canon. Let us pick up these threads of art historical material and weave them into the web and woof of the fabric of life. Let us realize that the constructive is the only life; that to create is a joy; that to build is life's purpose and man's function. Let us remember that the latent possibilities of a divine soul are inherent within us, slumbering perhaps, but only waiting to be called into development and expression.

Practitioners of secret doctrines

In the art historical scholarship of the 21st century, the idea that art must be considered as a product of social and spiritual dynamism continues to gain credence. As a result, the artist's social network, his or her membership of an esoteric organisation, and his or her views regarding certain phenomenon are now acknowledged as important factors in the creation of works, and issues of relevance to the interpretation of the meaning and orientation of an oeuvre. Research into anomalous or esoteric phenomena, the occult and paranormal pursuits — and how it relates to cultural production in at the dawn of the 20th century — has been pioneered in a number of particularly insightful studies, although there is much that remains unexplored.

The seven artists whose works form the focus of this pamphlet exemplify some of the early Moderns who developed their own 'ab-

stract' vocabularies as a means of communicating or implementing doctrine through the communication of pure form from one mind to another. Several of the works included may initially seem a reflection of the frenetic mechanisation of the material world and the resultant process of dehumanisation. However, we eschew familiar canonical judgements and assumptions in order to speculate upon unexplored elements present in each work — while also providing some conjecture on the possible motives lying behind each piece. In order to fully renew the dormant flourish of progressive potential inherent within the artworks selected, we shall touch upon the spiritual, philosophical and super-scientific zeitgeist. If we are to reawaken the possibility that lies embedded within these artworks, we must consider some of the doctrines and methods of analysis that were current when the artworks were first produced but that have since been discounted.

In extolling these artworks and the properties they possess we do not wish to revive that which can never again be. Rather, it is our belief that through these objects — or even through the narrative connected with them — one may access a state of grace. The pamphlet you hold now in your hands is an expression of admiration and deferential devotion.

Search for the spirit in the seven

One of the products of the process of secularisation that has distinguished Western culture over the last two centuries has been the elimination of a subtle instinctual connection between persons and things that might be termed numinous. Without numinosity, no energy passes between persons and things, with the result being that the individual is incapable of emotional attachment. While it is inevitable that some will interpret this tract as a dubious attempt to make works of art the arbitrary targets of a personal search for higher meaning, the true sum of this study of seven artists' works is an expression of the fact that ideas of the spiritual still hold some currency despite the systematic, unstoppable and inevitable deconstruction of religion as an important element of Western society and human culture.

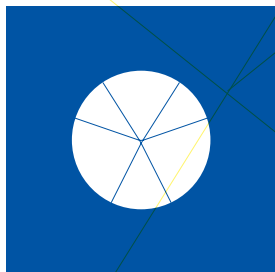
The seven artworks from the collection of

the Moderna Museet presented here may be interpreted as visual manifestations of fundamental universal laws that necessitate the use of an abstract language. Regardless of whether one can believe that these images are expressions of faith intended for reactivation, there is no doubt that they may be used as devices for contemplation. With time, even the most incredulous can be enchanted by the presence and idea of these objects, and can accept that the human animal is — on this evidence — capable of contributing positively to the world he or she inhabits.

It is our earnest hope — as it is our belief — that this little book of speculation and contemplation will serve as a striking lesson to every reader, making him or her realise the nature and power of thoughts, and reviving an alertness to the potentiality of phenomena that remain disputed. Consciousness — directed to the invisible worlds of a higher spiritual existence — has attracted through

magnetism images still clothed in splendour to these worlds. The artist who calls forth these images in our minds, the sculptor who conjures them up, is the Spirit. The thinking mind itself can be influenced by that which stimulates it. With this belief and hope we send it on its way.

The Swan no. 14
1914–1915



Hilma af Klint

B: October 26, 1862 in Stockholm, Sweden

D: October 21, 1944 in Djursholm, Sweden

Included in the work 'Paintings for the Temple' as:
'The Swan no. 14. Group IV, Series SUW', October
1914–March 1915

155×152 cm, oil on canvas

On loan from The Hilma af Klint Foundation

● Af Klint's work 'Swan no. 14' is the fourteenth in a series of 24 paintings entitled 'The Swan', and it belongs to the fourth of ten groups making up 'Paintings for the Temple' — a monumental project encompassing a total of 101 works produced between 1906 and 1916. Before commencing 'Paintings for the Temple', af Klint participated in spiritualist séances together with four female friends. The group — who referred to themselves as 'The Five', and later also as 'The Friday Group' — were the recipients of messages from spiritual entities calling themselves Gregor, Clemens and Amaliel. Through Amaliel, af Klint was introduced to a universal language of symbolism that was to form the foundation for her abstract painting. This spirit was to draw close to her for the entire 'Paintings for the Temple' project period, directing both her artistic and personal development at the time.

While scant information has been left by af Klint, her writings indicate that the series

address the struggle on the astral plane where the spiritual image of the human body is mirrored, and the ego overcomes evil in order to reach a higher plane in a unification of the sexes. In the beginning, the spirits directed at Klint's hand in the work, and she followed obediently and faithfully, not always understanding the nature of what she called "mediumistic painting". 'Group IV, Series SUW' — in which 'Swan no. 14' is included — came after an interlude of four years, between 1908 and 1912, during which at Klint familiarised herself more with the teachings of Madame Blavatsky, as well as Rudolf Steiner and Annie Besant. At this point, at Klint's painting became more independent. While Amaliel remained at her side, his instructions were mediated in words and appeared as images to her inner eye that she interpreted on canvas.

'Swan no. 14' has a totally black background with a white central circle within which a blue, yellow and red field issue from

a dynamic triangle — though it is believed that the colour field has lost its intensity and lustre with the passing years. The three basic colours — which encapsulate the trinity of 20th-century colour discourse — are charged with symbolic significance, with the upwardly radiating yellow and blue fields signifying the male and female principles respectively, while the red indicates Eros — a colour that binds man to woman at a higher spiritual level. The white circle represents perfection, pureness and the all-embracing universe, and the surrounding black field signifies worldly-burdened, base or evil forces. Given the series title, the white circle can be further interpreted as an egg — a representation of the beginnings of life itself as well as a distinct allusion to alchemy, in which the swan symbolises spiritual change and the first experience of the astral body. Indeed, in 'The Secret Doctrine', Madame Blavatsky, inspired by Hinduism, speaks of the Eternal Swan that lays the primordial

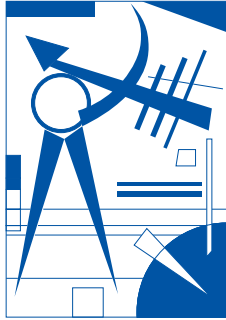
egg out of which the world is hatched.

Dualism — or, more precisely, the essence of duality portrayed in symbolic fashion — constitutes the driving force in af Klint's artistic work. The comprehensive goal of her practice is a harmonic unification with the other half, both in body — in the physical act of love — and in spirit, through the absorption of two souls in a cosmic unity. Despite her familiarity with theosophy, af Klint's roots stretched deep into Christianity. In order to be able to carry out the work of the paintings, and to unite with her other half on the astral plane, the spirits required af Klint to chastise her body and control her urges in prayer. She practiced fortitude to the extent that she finally refrained totally from presenting her life's work, living out her days in asceticism. She walked her own path through- out her entire life and found no real abode in any teaching or other artistic current. In her testament she insisted that her paintings not be publicly exhibited until

twenty years after her death, predicting that only then would they be properly understood. Her instructions deemed that the works were to be made available for the truth-seeker to meditate upon, like mandalas, in a temple built in the form of a spiral.



Green Split
1925



Wassily Kandinsky

B: December 16, 1866 in Moscow, Russia

D: December 13, 1944 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France

68,7×49 cm, oil on cardboard

Donated to the museum in 2000 by Olof Forssman

▲ If Hilma af Klint was the obsessive devotee who worked in a hermetic world, Wassily Kandinsky was her extrovert mirror. Kandinsky studied and practiced law, economy and ethnography before he decided to follow his calling and become an artist. He chose to develop painting — both as medium and expression — but at the same time he was a pioneer of interdisciplinary practice. Like all the artists in this pamphlet, Kandinsky shared the quest for an eternal inner truth expressed through visual art.

Kandinsky painted the work selected for this publication when he was 60 years old and at the pinnacle of his career. 'Green Split' is a concentric painting in which plain geometrical surfaces are woven with colours and laid in a spectrum of warm and cold. In the centre of the image is a luminous white circle — the representation of a human soul. Though surrounded and held back by black planes, the white circle is striving distinctly upward, creating a contradictory emotion.

In criticism, the spiritual content and intention of Kandinsky's work is often toned down and a more academic analysis of colour and form is emphasised instead. However, Kandinsky's spiritual and occult references — as well as the subordination of the material world that links Kandinsky's practice to that of the other six artists herein — were elucidated long before the painting of 'Green Split', in the artist's own text 'Concerning the spiritual in art' (1912). In this text, Kandinsky mapped out the logical and necessary development toward a non-figurative art, establishing the triangle, the circle and the square as key elements. Further he called for a schooling of the spirit through art — an art devoted to the service of humanity. He identified the role of the artist as the forerunner and the visionary — a concept he illustrated with a triangle, in which the artist is placed at the apex.

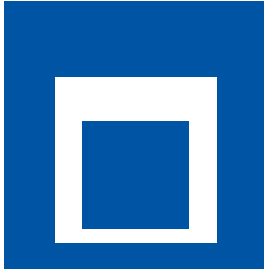
Among the most vociferously defended of Kandinsky's points in 'Concerning the spir-

itual in art' is his embrace of Theosophy. Kandinsky openly supported the theosophists and Madame Blavatsky, viewing theosophy as an organisation that linked individuals to the desire for a more spiritually orientated world in which inner knowledge holds the key to an eternal truth — unique to every person. When he cites the teachings of Madame Blavatsky:

The new torch-bearer of truth will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organisation awaiting his arrival, which will remove the merely mechanical, material obstacles, and difficulties from his path.

it is clear that Kandinsky identifies the artist as the bearer of this "torch". Together with other published texts of Kandinsky they make up an important documentation of the occult undercurrents of his time, as well as offering insight into an artist's work process and development. ▲

Evident
1960



Josef Albers

B: March 19, 1888 in Bottrop, Germany

D: March 25, 1976 in New Haven, USA

102×102 cm, oil on masonite

Acquisition made by the museum in 1964

■ Faith in the spirit of artistic creation enhances and deepens our perception of the material world, bringing about a reaffirmation of life. An artist whose work exemplifies this process was Josef Albers, a scientist of colour who in 1949 painted the first in a series of works entitled 'Homage to the Square'. The series is comprised of over a thousand artworks, all of which are ultimately the components of a single prolonged investigation of colour interaction. Each of the artworks in this series is unified by the compositional arrangement of mathematically devised squares that — depending upon Albers' meticulous use of colour — appear to advance and recede from the picture surface. The elegant austerity that distinguishes the series — and indeed Albers' entire oeuvre — is understandably often associated with the utilitarian functionalism favoured by the leading figures of the Weimar Bauhaus (where Albers enrolled in 1920). However, it is important to note that the ritual of aesthetic analysis that Albers

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applied in the production of the 'Homage' series might equally be seen as the manifestation of influences obtained at the Bauhaus that were altogether more mystical and esoteric than the aforementioned.



In order to consider Albers' intentions we do well to look not to the mechanised functional Utopia envisioned by Walter Gropius and his colleagues but instead to the milieu occupied by Johannes Itten and Paul Klee — early Bauhaus figures who were interested in the latent energy contained in the phenomena of consciousness. Itten was a central figure in the early stages of the Weimar Bauhaus, and it was under his direction that Albers was introduced to the idea that the colour spectrum carries subtle energies the presence and power of which may only be perceived by those with heightened psycho-spiritual perception. In its early phase the Weimar Bauhaus was, in fact, a diverse institution not

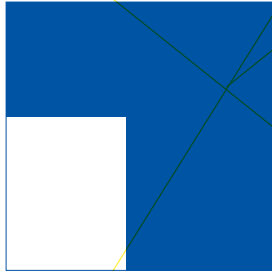
intolerant to Itten's observance of Mazdaznanism — a syncretistic movement, founded at the end of the 19th century, with a special focus on macrobiotic diet and body culture.

Though Itten resigned from the Bauhaus in 1923 following the school's inevitable adoption of mass production and industrialisation, there can be no doubt that his direction, and the mystic methodology that informed it, proved important to Albers. Meditation was a central part of the Mazdaznan regime and was considered central to a programme of self-transformation that was believed to cultivate an intuitive insight and heightened awareness. The geometric square has been used throughout history as an aid to meditation, and it is reported that Albers would focus upon a particular train or mode of thought whilst developing 'Homage to the Square'.

While the visual perception of pure hues was of interest to Albers, the possibility that colour can transmit psycho-spiritual tones

perceivable to those with a heightened sense of perception was a source of fascination. In an attempt to give aesthetic pleasure Albers introduced the possibility that spiritual vitalism imbues everything within the sense-perceptible outer world. Through devout prismatic contemplation and ocular introspection, his works can awaken within us all the true potential of our physical consciousness. ■

Black and White. Suprematist Composition
1915



Kasimir Severinovich Malevich

B: February 23, 1879 in Kiev, Ukraine

D: May 15, 1935 in Leningrad (St.Petersburg), Russia

80×80 cm, oil on canvas

Donated to the museum in 2004 by Bengt Jangfeld

■ Though many theories concerning the existence of a fourth dimension were propounded at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, one of the most extraordinary was that proposed by Charles Hinton. Hinton believed that a fourth dimension could be made to reveal itself through appropriate mental practice involving a complicated set of coloured blocks — bringing forward a complete system of four-dimensional thought in mechanics, science, and art.

Art itself became enraptured with the fourth dimension in the early 20th century. The fact that spiritual ideas permeated the environment around abstract artists in the early 20th century is accepted, but — as stated elsewhere in this pamphlet — the true extent to which this assisted artists in transcending tendencies toward narrative and representational function in favour of what might be termed 'pure' painting remains unacknowledged. When the Cubist painter and theorist Albert Gleizes said:

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Beyond the three dimensions of Euclid we have added another, the fourth dimension, which is to say, the figuration of space, the measure of the infinite.

he united maths and art, bringing together two major characteristics of the fourth dimension in early Modern Art theory: the geometric orientation as a higher spatial dimension, and the metaphorical association with infinity.



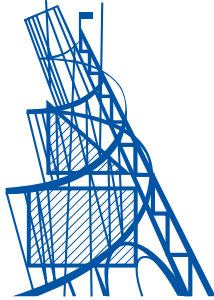
The supposition that in addition to three familiar dimensions of space there might also exist a fourth dimension inaccessible to our perception was also proposed by the Russian mystic-mathematician P. D. Ouspensky, a major contributor to 20th-century ideas who anticipated many key questions in philosophy, psychology and religion. One of several thinkers to investigate the idea of a fourth dimension in relation to mathematics, Ouspensky produced work that was of deep signif-

icance for Kasimir Malevich, whose Suprematist artworks were intended to represent the concept of a body passing from ordinary three-dimensional space into the fourth dimension.

Much has been written about how Suprematism sought to transcend tendencies toward narrative and representational function. Throughout his practice, Malevich fused his interest in the fourth dimension with occult numerological systems to create his deceptively uncomplicated Suprematist compositions. 'White Rectangle on Black Background' is one of the 39 paintings he included in '0.10', the seminal exhibition that took place in Petrograd in 1915 (the year the artist published his manifesto 'From Cubism to Suprematism'). Though we can only speculate, it would seem likely that the reason Malevich ceased painting Suprematist icons after a period of just five years was not because of a rejection of Ouspensky's theories — which proposed that the discovery of a

fourth dimension would lead to a new epoch in human development — but because his work was considered incompatible with the ideological aims of the state. ■

Model for Monument for the
3rd International, 1919–1920
1981



Vladimir Tatlin

B: December 28, 1885 in Kharkiv, Ukraine

D: May 31, 1953 in Moscow, Russia

465 cm in height, 336 cm in diameter, wood and
metal, Falu-red paint

Produced by the museum and transferred to the
museum collection in 1976 after exhibition

● The Model for Tatlin's Monument to the Third International cannot be categorised as a finished work of art in the same way as the other artworks included in this investigation. Rather, this model is the prototype for an ambitious structure comprised of two interlocking iron spirals, 1,300 feet in height, within which were to be supported massive glass and iron superstructures. These interior superstructures were to consist of a cube, a cylinder, a cone and a hemisphere and were to rotate at different paces: the cylinder annually, the cone monthly, and the topmost cube daily. The small hemisphere, added during the later stages of the project, was to rotate once per hour. The monumental edifice never developed beyond a 21-foot-high sculptural structure, made from wood, paper and glue and unveiled in Petrograd in 1920 to commemorate the third anniversary of the October Revolution. This model was born in part from Tatlin's desire to marry revolutionary intellectual and conceptual develop-

ments with modern technology and material. The question of whether or not he knew from the outset that the monument would never be developed beyond a maquette remains a mystery — but it is apposite that the tower remain unrealised considering it was viewed as epitomising the triumph of the Communist project in Russia.



Since the structure was never built, we must focus upon the formal qualities of the model, which possess powerful philosophical connotations that are themselves worthy of further study. For example, the two intersecting spirals might be interpreted as an expression of the philosophical belief that all things can be described in terms of cycles and patterns, and of the spiral course charted by universal motion on all planes of being, physical and superphysical. In ancient architecture, specific geometric forms were used in the design of sacred buildings to produce spiritual

energy that facilitated connectivity with spiritual realms through prayer. The geometry of these shapes — frequently hemispheres and pyramids — was used in various ways by the artists discussed in this study. Throughout, the geometric tendencies in the artworks discussed reflect the profound need for order and measure — more through sensibility and reason than as a result of calculation. As we have seen, Malevich's use of geometry, specifically, was central to his experimental attempts to locate an intra-dimensional doorway through his investigations into the concept of the fourth dimension.

Tatlin's tower exemplifies the genuine utopianism that flourished — possibly for the last time — during the Modernist project. Palpable in this artwork is a transcendental, visionary essence: a sense of confident possibility in spite of impending potential doom, and faith in the idea that there is always some sort of redemption to be found. The fact that model in the collection of the Mod-

erna Museet is not one of the originals but was commissioned by Pontus Hultén in 1968 (another year of revolution▲) is — like the issue of whether or not Tatlin believed the edifice would be built — not relevant to this particular investigation. What is important is Tatlin's adoration of a geometric vocabulary loaded with meaning, which he shared with the other producers whose works form the focus of this investigation. ■

▲ Tatlin was the principal artist to benefit from the rediscovery and rehabilitation of the Russian avant-gardes carried out by Hultén with the help of Willem Sandberg, the director of the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam and Troels Andersen, the Danish historian. With Andersen, Hultén — then director at the Moderna Museet of Stockholm — conceived a retrospective of Tatlin's work that opened its doors in the summer of 1968. The retrospective was based on research Andersen undertook mainly through T. M. Shapiro, one of Tatlin's assistants for the construction of the first Model of the Monument to the Third International in Pétrograd in 1919–1920. Hultén aimed to resuscitate one of the symbols of the Revolution in Russian art and society, stating that at this period: "For the first time, it seemed possible that an artist-engineer materialised the synthesis of architecture and sculpture."

Space-force Construction
1921



Lioubov Serguéïevna Popova

B: April 24, 1889 in Moscow, Russia

D: May 25, 1924 in Moscow, Russia

56,9×57,9 cm, outer measurement: 80×81×5,3cm,
oil on plywood

Donated to the museum in 2008 by Krister Olsson

● A shadow of incredulity darkened steadily throughout the latter half of the 20th century, strengthening the inconsistent and permeable boundary that divides science from the supernatural. The accelerated advancement of techno-science resulted in a variety of phenomena involving the human body and brain being unjustly dismissed as bearing the whiff of new-ageism and pseudo-science. One such unjustly maligned area is that of the electromagnetic field surrounding the human body (Human Energy Field) — the source of what is commonly referred to as the aura.

During the 19th century, the scientist Karl von Reichenbach spent many years attempting to verify the existence of the aura, although he was ridiculed by many of his colleagues. Nevertheless, his work was taken up by a succession of other experimenters, before, in 1958, the Soviet scientists Semyon Davidovich and his wife Valentina Khrisanova Kirlian described electropho-

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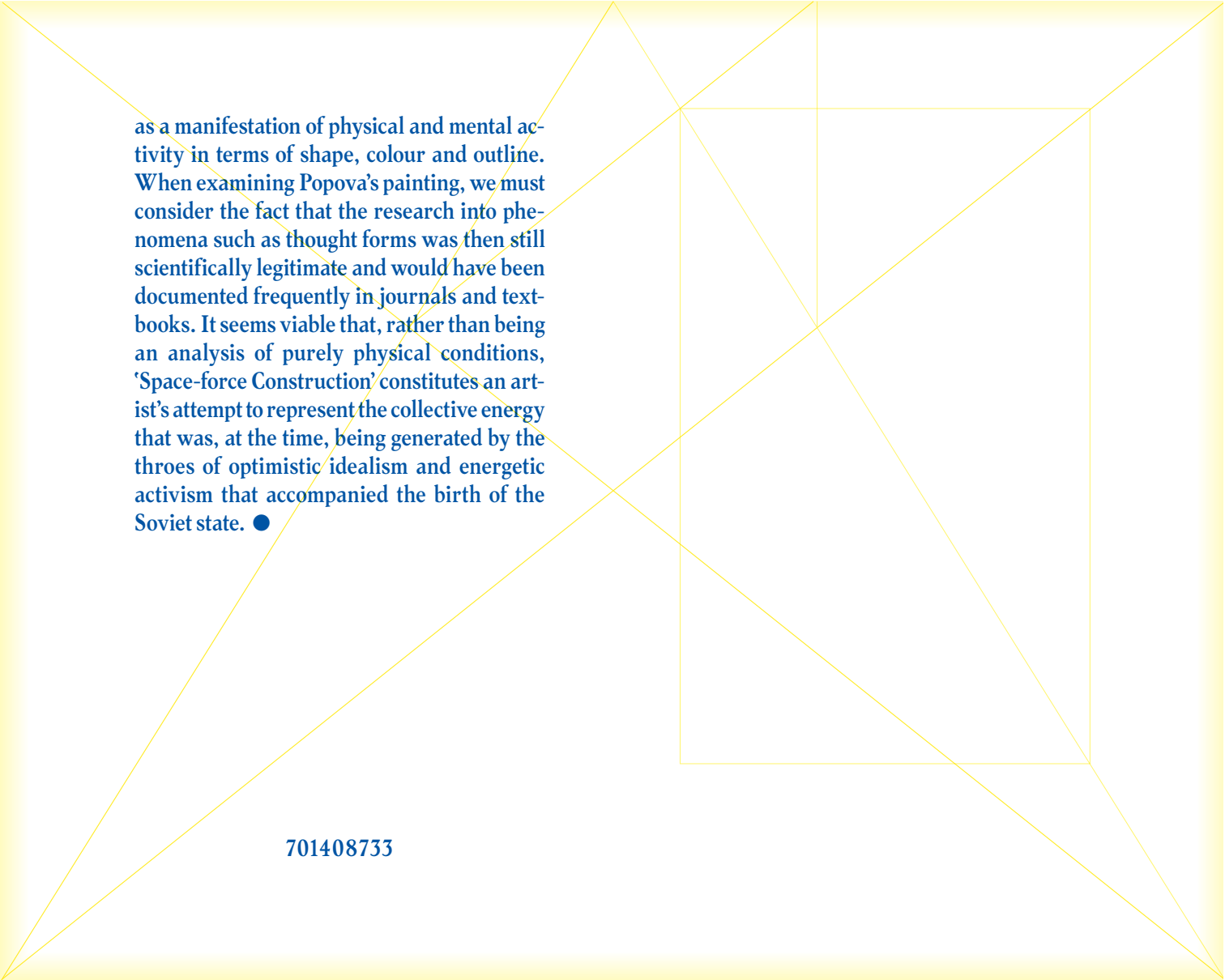
tography — a photographic technique of converting the nonelectrical properties of an object into electrical properties recorded on photographic film. The method used in Kirlian photography was a modern extrapolation from a technique known as early as the 1890s but not formerly applied to the human aura — suggesting that the investigation and documentation of bioelectric phenomenon has precedent in Russian history.



We now turn our attention to the selected artist, Ljubov Popova, whose career as a cultural producer commenced against the backdrop of social and political foment. Russian artists working in Europe returned home at the outbreak of WW1, bringing with them innovative concepts and idioms. These artists were then trapped in Russia for the duration of the war, during which period the country became — in a sense — a vacuum of external ideas and experimentation, leading to an increasingly

revolutionary atmosphere. An ardent supporter of the Soviet state, Popova produced artworks that share formal characteristics with those of other artists within her circle investigating what she termed “the culture of material.” However, Popova’s painting — in which she layers shifting and rotating hues and shapes — also operates outside the specific socio-political context into which it has been locked by subsequent historical readings. Part of a movement that wanted to believe that engineers and scientists could collaborate with artists for common goals, Popova created paintings that might easily be interpreted not merely as abstract images, but as reflections of oscillating energy fields.

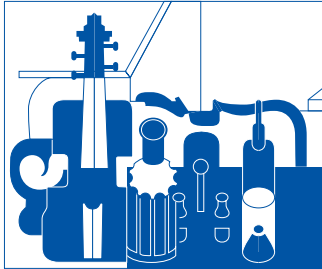
Popova’s work is illuminated further with reference to Charles Leadbeater and Annie Besant’s book ‘Thought Forms’, which was first published in 1901 and which found immediate popularity amongst artists seeking to develop modern means of expression. The book focuses upon fields of energy observed



as a manifestation of physical and mental activity in terms of shape, colour and outline. When examining Popova's painting, we must consider the fact that the research into phenomena such as thought forms was then still scientifically legitimate and would have been documented frequently in journals and textbooks. It seems viable that, rather than being an analysis of purely physical conditions, 'Space-force Construction' constitutes an artist's attempt to represent the collective energy that was, at the time, being generated by the throes of optimistic idealism and energetic activism that accompanied the birth of the Soviet state. ●

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Composition
1929



Amédée Ozenfant

B: April 15, 1886 in Saint-Quentin, France

D: May 4, 1966 in Cannes, France

45×55 cm, oil on canvas

Donated in 1969 by the Friends of Moderna Museet

▲ In 1915, Amédée Ozenfant, despite having his roots in French cubism, established and funded the magazine 'L'Élan', in which he criticised cubism for becoming decorative and ornamental. A few years later, in 1918, he met Jean Jeanneret (who later called himself Le Corbusier) and together they issued the book 'Après Le Cubisme', establishing the outlines of Purism. They continued their collaboration, articulating and synthesizing ideas on Purism in the art journal 'L'Esprit Nouveau', published in Paris between 1920 and 1925. In 'Foundations of Modern Art', which first appeared in French in 1928 (and subsequently in English in 1931) Ozenfant summarised Purism and its importance.

Ozenfant was driven by a desire to systematically convey a deeper understanding for what he perceived to be mankind's inherent and constant nature by means of discipline and order, and 'Foundations of Modern Art' offers an insight into the basis of the Purist credo to which he adhered through-

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out his life. In 'Foundations', Ozenfant speaks about the activation of a spiritual connection between mankind and the world around him. For Ozenfant, art gives primordial chaos a form that can be perceived by man, thereby creating his world:

It is what is not seen that should be painted: art is the rendering perceptible of mystery.



'Composition', one of many variations on the still-life theme, is emblematic of the Purist school. While at the height of this Purist period, Ozenfant departed entirely from real or potentially real objects, thus the representational element in this work is strong. The colour application is even and opaque, with the background colour plane composed of distinctly separate dense tones of light blue, grey and grey-blue. These tones follow the golden ratio, lending harmony while under-

lining the austere image content.

Even if the non-figurative was not Ozenfant's intended orientation, it is logical that it revealed itself as his destination. Systematically, he reduced and denied forms in his paintings until they became pure constants and — inevitably — abstractions. For Ozenfant, the criterion for worthy content in a work is whether it is elevating, producing a reaction that is entirely founded on the emotive. Geometry, for its part, captures our attention, but more complex relations must subsequently be activated to keep our attention with the work. Ozenfant's interest lies in the systematic itself: whether geometric, chromatological or Cabbalistic, the system in question is not important. Its importance lies, rather, in how it is utilised by the artist in order to activate our collective ability to sense and respond. When a specific system becomes a trend and is long and broad enough to pull many artists along with it, the spirit of the times is affected, along with that of aes-

thetics as well as ethics. This is why, Ozenfant maintains, art cannot be entirely free. However, this constraint facilitates rather than prevents our sense of elevation when we witness nature, instinct and intellect convene within an artwork.

Ozenfant's faith in art is steadfast and generous but he demands a pureness of expression and a distinct humanistic intention. The title of this pamphlet 'Nevertheless, faith is in the air' is a quote from 'Foundations of Modern Art'. Ozenfant continues:

Believe who can, that is all that can be said. Faith is impervious to all criticism. To believe is to feel there is an absolute, and he who believes knows. It is a question of Grace.



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| Artist | Form | Mind | Elements | Harmony | Colour | Rays | Force | Compos. | Planet | Distrib. of hue | Attitude | Day |
|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|--------|------|-------------|----------------------|---------|------------------------|----------|-----|
| Albers | Evolution/ Subatomic | Ceremonial Order | ■ | Contrast | Heat | 1st | Centrifugal | Ether Magnetics | Jupiter | Shades of Colour | Straight | Mon |
| Ozenfant | Physical/ Solid | Concrete Science | ■▲ | Contrast | Cold | 2nd | Centripetal | Matter | Moon | Tints of Colour | Straight | Tue |
| Popova | Angles/ Molecular | Will or Power | ●▲ | Connect | Heat | 3rd | Centrifugal | Electro Positives | Saturn | Tints of Colour | Curved | Wed |
| Kandinsky | Intuition/ Energy | Love Wisdom | ●▲ | Connect | Heat | 4th | Centripetal | Ether Magnetics | Mercury | Tints of Colour | Curved | Thu |
| Tatlin | Mental/ Gaseous | Harmony through Conflict | ■●▲ | Contrast | Heat | 5th | Centrifugal | Matter | Mars | Shades of Colour | Straight | Fri |
| Af Klint | Astral/ Liquid | Devotion | ●▲ | Connect | Cold | 6th | Centripetal | Ether Magnetics | Moon | Shades of Colour | Straight | Sat |
| Malevich | Consciousness/ Atomic | Active Intelligence | ■ | Contrast | Cold | 7th | Centrifugal | Ether Magnetics | Mercury | Shades of Colour | Straight | Sun |

Analysis: The chart above provides parameters linking the seven artworks. These parameters emerged from the analysis we made of the seven artworks according to subjective application of several strands of the esoteric sciences.

The Luminiferous Aether

In addition to an introductory lecture presented by Diana Kaur and Padraic E Moore the event to celebrate the dissemination of 'Nevertheless, Faith is in the Air' included a presentation of the The Luminiferous Aether. The Luminiferous Aether comprises of documentation made by Robin Watkins of low frequency audio signals, which originate from the streams of charged particles that reach the Earth's atmosphere through the Solar Wind, giving rise to the Aurora Borealis and other magnetic storms. With temperatures dropping to minus 50°C, the field recordings of Solar radiation were made during three consecutive days and nights outside of a small village in the remote Yukon-Koyukuk region (the Arctic Circle, Alaska). For the studio sound screening, listeners collectively experienced the work through individual radio headphones and receivers, grouped in front of a central transmitter.

www.canellwatkins.org

Æ — Thanks to the Aion Foundation for their support in making this facet of the event possible

Lectio Divinia/Bibliography

Lectio Divinia is the divine reading. It is an exercise in meditative contemplation. A discipline of intuitive and affective dwelling on text or image. Here follows a selection of literature that informed the analysis of the seven artworks within this publication.

Albers, Josef

'Interaction of Color'

Originally published in 1963

af Klint, Hilma

'Vägen till templet, förberedelsestiden 1886–1906'

Edited by Gurli Lindén and first published in 1996

Besant, Annie and Leadbeater, Charles Webster

'Thought Forms'

Originally published in 1901

Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna

'The Secret Doctrine, the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy'

Originally published as two volumes in 1888

Hinton, Charles Henry

'The Fourth Dimension'

Originally published in 1904

Jacob Böhme

'Three Principles of Divine Essence'

Originally published in 1618–19 in German

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang

'Theory of Colours'

Originally published in 1810 in German

Kandinsky, Wassily

'Concerning the Spiritual in Art'

Originally published in 1912 in German

Also published as 'The Art of Spiritual Harmony' in 1914

Kandinsky, Wassily

'Point and Line to Plane'

Originally published in 1926 in German

Kandinsky, Wassily

'On the Question of Form'

Originally published in Der Blauer Reiter Almanac, 1912 in German

Kandinsky, Wassily and Marc, Franz

Preface to 'Der Blauer Reiter Almanac'

Originally published in 1912 in German

Leadbeater, Charles Webster
'Man Visible and Invisible'
Originally published in 1902

Malevich, Kasimir Severinovich
'Suprematism'
Originally published in 1927

Nizida
'The Astral Light: An Attempted Exposition of
Certain Occult Principles in Nature With Some
Remarks upon Modern Spiritism 1889'
Originally published in 1889

Ouspensky, Peter Demianovich
'A New Model Of The Universe — Principles of the
Psychological Method in its Application to
problems of Science, Religion and Art'
Ouspensky claimed the book to be written before
1914, though first published in 1931

Ozenfant, Amédée
'Foundations of Modern Art'
Originally published in 1928 in French

Steiner, Rudolf
'Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age'
Originally published in 1901

Colophon

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