**Valle D'Aosta Autonomous Region Antonio Mazzotta Foundation**

Education and Culture Department

# Wassily Kandinsky e l’arte astratta tra Italia e Francia

# Wassily Kandinsky and abstract art between Italy and France

Produced by the Education and Culture Department of the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta

in partnership with the Antonio Mazzotta Foundation, Milan, Italy

curated by Alberto Fiz

with scientific expert advice by Pietro Bellasi and Guido Magnaguagno

**Aosta, Regional Archeological Museum**

**Up until 21 October 2012**

**A great exhibition with more than 90 works**

On this occasion the Music Room of the Berlin Building Exhibition of 1931 designed by Kandinsky has been recreated and Alessandro Mendini pays a special tribute to the Russian master.

*Press release, 5 June 2012*

On 25 May the great exhibition ***Wassily Kandinsky e l'arte astratta tra Italia e Francia/Wassily Kandinsky and abstract art between Italy and France*** was launched at the Regional Archeological Museum of Aosta with great success in terms of critics and public and it will continue on until 21 October 2012.

The event curated by **Alberto Fiz**, produced by the **Education and Culture Department of the Autonomous Region of Valle d’Aosta** in partnership with the **Antonio Mazzotta Foundation**, focuses on the creative artistic career of Kandinsky, which begins in 1925 when he finished writing the fundamental manuscript *Punto, Linea, superficie/Dot, Line, Surface* (published in 1926) and ends in 1944 when he died.

In 1933, after Hitler gained power, he moved from Germany to Paris where he lived for eleven years and, even though he seemed rather isolated (*Isolation* is the name of the symbolic painting of 1944 on display at the exhibition) in a city where the surrealists domineered, his artistic research found new stimuli reaching completely innovative results, which were often undervalued. The works from this period represent a real breakthrough in his artistic investigation and will have crucial effects on the events of the '50s and '60s, with outcomes that still affect today's events.

One of the main goals of the exhibition is to explore the Paris period thanks to a series of great masterpieces such as *Noir bigarré* of 1935, *Voisinage* of 1939, *Au milieu* and *Balancement* of 1942.

Next to the works by the great Russian master, about 40 (among which stand out some masterpieces of the '30s and '40s **never seen in Italy**), there are another 40 works by Italian and French artists who were in contact with Kandinsky or took inspiration from his work.

The exhibition opens with an educational section, characterized by an interactive panel which reproduces the work *Noir bigarré* of 1935 and allows the visitor to re-create “his/her own Kandinsky”, moving around the magnetic colourful details of the painting.

In the next room, the music of a piano accompanies the visitor to admire the recreation of the Music Room of the Berlin Building Exhibition of 1931 originally designed by Kandinsky; an environment of strong impact which hosts important works by the Russian master - created by the artist in the second half of the '20s - such as *Rot in Spitzform* of 1925, *Sichel* of 1926, *Schwarzes Stäbchen* of 1928 and the very colourful etchings of the series *Piccoli Mondi/Small Worlds* of 1922, laid down on a display table in a circular ring.

In the following rooms the works by Wassily Kandinsky alternate with those by Italian and French artists: **Jean Arp**, **Sophie Taeuber-Arp**, **César Domela**, **Piero Dorazio**, **Gillo Dorfles**, **Florence Henri,** **Alberto Magnelli**, **Alessandro Mendini**, **Joan Miró**, **Gianni Monnet**, **Francis Picabia, Mauro Reggiani**, **Atanasio Soldat**i, **Ettore Sottsass** and **Luigi Veronesi**, among which one can sense a real, productive and creative exchange. The works by these artists, often characterized by a strong chromatism and dynamic lines, reveal the influence and the connection with the Russian master.

Additionally in another room of the exhibition there is the **recording of the "stage composition**" of Kandinsky, *Violett*, with setting panels created according to his design, with the cooperation of the Sprengel Museum of Hannover. The recording presents the transposition curated by Verein Kunst und Bühne of Hannover which was held at the Sprengel Museum of Hannover in 1996.

The video brings to light the eclectic character of Kandinsky, as well as the link between art and music so very important to his artistic research.

Worth a special mention is the reference to the design by **Alessandro Mendini** who presents an outright homage to Kandinsky through the creation of an **environment entirely inspired by the Russian master** with a tapestry, a painting, a cupboard, a mirror and the couch *Kandissi* of 1978, one of the most famous pieces manufactured by Studio Alchimia, where there is a concrete fusion between colour and shape, entirely consistent with Kandinsky's theories. As Mendini writes, “The composition of objects is made of visual signs, the stylist elements are the graphic signs ready to invade everything. It is a continuous, energetic, infinite process”.

The **cross** character of the exhibition promotes a deep critic analysis in a context which involves Italy and France and in regard to this there are plenty of views to investigate, some never considered before, of interest for those keen on Abstract Art and those who experience this genre for the first time.

“The language developed by Kandinsky, as a progressive tension of strengths, leads him to overcome the traditional aesthetic principles and to conquer new spatial perspectives which will be crucial for art in the aftermath of the second world war with effects on the American abstract expressionism”, according to Alberto Fiz.

The exhibition, that avails itself of a **prestigious scientific committee** of which Pietro Bellasi, Riccardo Carazzetti and Martina Mazzotta Lanza are part, is completed by an important **catalogue** in Italian and French, published by **Gabriele Mazzotta**, with texts by Alberto Fiz, Pietro Bellasi, Cristina Casero, Gillo Dorfles, Alessandro Mendini and Marco Vallora and other critical texts.

DETAILS

# Name Wassily Kandinsky e l’arte astratta tra Italia e Francia/ Wassily Kandinsky and abstract art between Italy and France

**Curated by** Alberto Fiz

**Scientific Committee** Pietro Bellasi

Riccardo Carazzetti

Guido Magnaguagno

Martina Mazzotta Lanza

**Venue Aosta**, Regional Archeological Museum

Piazza Roncas 12 - www.regione.vda.it

**Dates**  26 May-21 October 2012

**Opening Hours** Everyday 9am-7pm

**Entrance Fees** Full € 5,00, reduced € 3,50, free under 18yrs and over 65yrs

**Production** Education and Culture Department of the Autonomous Region Valle d’Aosta

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**Catalogue** Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, Milan

**Size** 24x28cm, 192 pages, colour

**Texts by** Pietro Bellasi, Cristina Casero, Gillo Dorfles, Alberto Fiz, Alessandro Mendini, Nicoletta Ossanna Cavadini, Marco Vallora

**Additional texts**: Critic anthology; anthology of Kandinsky's writings; biographies of all the authors; essential bibliography

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