



Press release

20 November 2008

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM AND THE NEW AMERICAN PAINTING

21 November 2008 – 1 March 2009

Vercelli, Arca – Church of San Marco, Piazza San Marco 1

Inauguration: 20 November 2008, 6pm

On November 20, the Piedmont Region and the City of Vercelli, in partnership with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, inaugurate the exhibition **Peggy Guggenheim and the New American Painting** in the Arca, a purpose-built space in the former Church of San Marco, Vercelli. The exhibition opens to the public on November 21.

Arca

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Piazza San Marco 1
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Città di Vercelli

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13100 Vercelli
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Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, this is the second episode in a grand exhibition project which was begun in November 2007 with the hugely successful "Peggy Guggenheim and the Surrealist Imagination."

Over a period of three years, the spaces of the Arca will host a trilogy of exhibitions presenting the visual arts avantgardes of the middle third of the 20th century seen through the lens of the career of the patroness and gallerist Peggy Guggenheim. The project brings to Vercelli historic masterpieces of the last century.

"Peggy Guggenheim and the New American Painting" focuses on Peggy Guggenheim's American years, when she came to know several young artists whose work she exhibited at her museum-gallery Art of This Century, in gallery shows which stimulated critical debate about the identity of American art. In the milieu of New York during World War II she promoted these painters, many of whom were soon to be acknowledged as the masters of a new generation of American art, with astonishing intuition and boldness.

The exhibition presents the work of twentyone artists, especially **Jackson Pollock** and **Mark Rothko**, and also including **Franz Kline**, **Robert Motherwell**, **Arshile Gorky**, **Willem de Kooning**, **Sam Francis**, **Hans Hofmann** – each of them leading exponents of Abstract Expressionism – with more than fifty paintings from the New York and Venice holdings of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, as well as rarely-seen paintings from private collections and from the artists' estates, represented in Europe by the American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich.

A central figure in the exhibition is Jackson Pollock, whose myth was born thanks to Peggy Guggenheim, and who was to become one of the most important artists internationally in the post-war period. Fourteen of his works – an extraordinary body of work given the rarity, fragility and value of Pollock's paintings - are being shown in Vercelli, representing an important opportunity for the Italian public.

Other major presences are those of Mark Rothko, with rare paintings of the 1940s that were absent from the recent retrospective in Rome, and Franz Kline, whose black paint strokes on a white ground are characteristic of Action Painting.



Città di Vercelli



The exhibition has been co-organized with **Giunti Arte mostre musei**, publisher of the catalogue, which has developed educational and communications programs for the exhibition.

“Peggy Guggenheim and the New American Painting” is a project of “Contemporary Arts Torino Piemonte”, promoted by the Piedmont Region, the Province of Turin, and the City of Turin.

The exhibition has been made possible with the support of:

Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Vercelli, Provincia di Vercelli, Banca Popolare di Novara , Sambonet, Oracle, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, Zschimmer & Schwarz Italiana, Atena.

Media partner: La Stampa.

For further information, go to www.guggenheimvercelli.it.

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