

# Peggy Guggenheim COLLECTION

Palazzo Venier dei Leoni

701 Dorsoduro

30123 Venezia, Italy

Telephone 041 2405 411

Telefax 041 5206885

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Press release

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## AMAZONS OF THE AVANT-GARDE EXTER, GONCHAROVA, POPOVA, ROZANOVA, STEPANOVA, UDALTSOVA March 1 - May 28, 2000

Press Preview: Tuesday 29 February, 12 midday to 5.30 p.m.

Press Conference: 3.30 p.m.; Panel: Thomas Krens (Director, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation), Philip Rylands (Deputy Director, Peggy Guggenheim Collection), John Bowlt (curator), Matthew Drutt (curator), Zelfira Tregulova (curator), Rupert Nichol Limentani (Director U.O. Financial Institutions, Deutsche Bank Italy), Ariane Grigoteit (curator, Deutsche Bank Collection), Friedhelm Hütte (curator, Deutsche Bank Collection).

From 1 March to 28 May 2000 the Peggy Guggenheim Collection presents *Amazons of the Avant-Garde*, an exhibition dedicated to six extraordinary women artists of the Russian avant-garde: Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Ljubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova and Nadezhda Udaltsova. This travelling exhibition, made possible by Deutsche Bank and organised for the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin, will display more than 70 paintings, loaned from over 30 public and private collections. The first museum exhibition of its kind, *Amazons of the Avant-Garde* brings to the West paintings from private collections and museums in Russia and the former Soviet regions such as Kiev, Ufa, Kazan, Perm and Kirov, as well as Moscow and St Petersburg.

The exhibition is organised around individual surveys of the work of these six artists and traces the evolution of the Russian avant-garde painting from the turn of the century to the mid-1920s, one of the most vital and prolific chapters in the history of modern art. Artists had a crucial impact on political, ideological and social thought and one of the most singular phenomena of that era was the outstanding work produced by women artists who were at the forefront of Russian art in the first three decades of this century. Benedikt Livshits, poet and friend of Exter and Rozanova, was the first to describe these women artists as “real Amazons, Scythian riders”; they were an “important driving force for the avant-garde movement and brought with them a pioneer spirit, without which the successful development of the movement would have been unimaginable.”

Russian art of the early twentieth century was informed both by an assimilation of European vanguard ideas such as Dada, Futurism and Cubism and by indigenous traditions such as folk and primitive art. The presentation of the exhibition at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice offers an ideal setting for understanding the achievements of these Russian artists against the background of Parisian Cubism and of works by other Russian artists (Malevich, El Lissitzky, Chagall, Kandinsky, Pevsner), as well as of Italian Futurism, magnificently represented in the Gianni Mattioli Collection. Seventy six years have passed since the Russian avant-garde (including several of the artists in the present exhibition) was presented in the Russian pavilion at the XIVth Venice Biennale of 1924: its last appearance internationally before it was stifled in Russia in the 1930s.

“The Guggenheim Foundation has an illustrious history in collecting and presenting the art of the Russian-avant-garde” noted Thomas Krens, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. “This exhibition brings together some of the most distinguished masterpieces of the period, and offers new insights into one of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries boldest avant-gardes.”

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*Amazons of the Avant-Garde* has been organised by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, and curated by Professor John E. Bowlt, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Matthew Drutt, Associate Curator of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, and Zelfira Tregulova, an independent curator, Moscow.

The exhibition is the first travelling exhibition organised for the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (10 July - 17 October 1999). Following Berlin, the exhibition has been shown at the Royal Academy of Arts, London (13 November 1999 - 6 February 2000). After Venice, the exhibition will continue to travel, ending its tour in New York at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (14 September 2000 - 7 January 2001).

The catalogue provides newly discovered documentation on this historic subject, together with an analysis of the contribution to social, cultural and psychological phenomena of women artists in the emergence of a critical 20<sup>th</sup> century avant-garde. It is published by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York and will be available in English and Italian.

This exhibition is made possible by

**Deutsche Bank** 

The programs of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection are made possible by the support of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection Advisory Board, the Regione Veneto, Alitalia and:

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### **INTRAPRESÆ COLLEZIONE GUGGENHEIM**

Aermec	Gruppo Imation Italia
Arclinea	Leo Burnett
Automotive Products Italia	Lubiam 1911
Banca Antoniana	Luciano Marcato
Popolare Veneta	Palladio Finanziaria
Barbero 1891	Rex Built-In
Bisazza	Siplea
Booz•Allen & Hamilton Italia	Swatch
Damiani	Wella
Gretag Imaging Group	Zucchi - Bassetti Group
Gruppo 3M Italia	

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