

## Media release

11.09.2003

### **The Spiritual Landscape**

From the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's collection and in collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice

**Place of exhibition:** Galleria Gottardo, cultural foundation of Banca del Gottardo, Lugano, viale Stefano Franscini 12

**Length of the exhibition:** 17 September - 22 November 2003

**Opening hours:** Tuesday 02.00 pm - 05.00 pm; Wednesday-Saturday 10.00 am - 05.00 pm - Sunday 11.00 am - 04.00 pm

**Entrance:** free

**Press conference:** Tuesday 16 September at 11.00 am

**Vernissage:** Tuesday 16 September 06.00 pm - 08.00 pm

**Catalogue:** Galleria Gottardo and Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, texts by Susan Cross and Vivien Greene

**Realisation and co-ordination:** Luca Patocchi

**Graphical project and installation:** Alberto Bianda

Galleria Gottardo - a cultural foundation of Banca del Gottardo, continues its collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, started in 2001 with the exhibition "Il ritrovo degli artisti. Brief history in images of the collector Peggy Guggenheim", that met with a great success.

This second project, that assumed the form of the exhibition **The Spiritual Landscape**, is the result of the collaboration of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of New York, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice and the Galleria Gottardo. After Lugano, the display, curated by Susan Cross and Vivien Greene and first shown at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2001, shall go on view in Venice in the magnificent rooms of Palazzo Venier dei Leoni on the Canal Grande, the seat of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

Lugano, 11.09.2003

Drawn from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's permanent collection, **The Spiritual Landscape** presents masterpieces by leading artists of the European avant-garde: Albert Gleizes, Vasily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, Piet Mondrian, Gabriele Münter, and Emil Nolde. This intimate exhibition explores the ways in which these artists related the theme of nature to notions of spirituality in the pivotal phase that preceded the inception of abstraction in their work.

With the advent of the twentieth century, artists began to employ nature as a vehicle to convey spirituality. Vasily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, who together founded the Munich-based Blue Rider group in 1911, both adopted this approach. But the quest for the transcendental in landscape and animal imagery extended to other painters of the period as well, including several artists who had links to the Blue Rider such as group member Gabriele Münter and German Expressionist Emil Nolde, whose work was included in a Blue Rider exhibition.

The focus on spirituality and the impulse to realize meditative scenes of inner visions rather than strictly representational compositions, ultimately led artists of the era to create purely abstract imagery. The works in *The Spiritual Landscape* evidence the crucial period immediately before several of these painters began to dematerialise the object and execute non-representational paintings, forever altering the relationship between concept and form.

**The Spiritual Landscape** comprises paintings, watercolors, and woodcuts from the core of the institution's holdings, many of them purchased by Solomon R. Guggenheim himself in the 1930s and 1940s when he was establishing the museum's founding collection in New York. This exhibition will give a greater international public the opportunity to see a selection of 25 Guggenheim Museum works – some rarely allowed to travel – which represent one of the greatest strengths of the collection.

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A bilingual catalogue - Italian and English - with texts by Susan Cross and Vivien Greene, associate curators at the Guggenheim Museum in New York and managers of the exhibition, is at disposal.

*Galleria Gottardo, a cultural foundation of Banca del Gottardo*

*Banca del Gottardo, Institutional Patron of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation*

For further information and requests for photographic material, please contact:

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