

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

Press Release

Mystical Symbolism: The Salon de la Rose+Croix in Paris, 1892-1897

Curated by Vivien Greene

October 28 2017 – January 7, 2018

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

From October 28, 2017 through January 7, 2018, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection will present *Mystical Symbolism: The Salon de la Rose+Croix in Paris, 1892-1897*, the first museum exhibition on this revelatory and significant yet frequently overlooked series of Salons. Mysterious, mythical, and visionary themes, often drawn from literature, prevailed in the art of the six exhibitions, which were held annually in Paris from 1892 to 1897. Images of *femmes fragiles* and *fatales*, androgynous creatures, chimeras, and incubi were the norm, as were sinuous lines, attenuated figures, and anti-naturalistic forms. Featuring highlights from the Salons, this exhibition will include approximately forty works by a cross section of artists—some familiar, others less so—and invite a fresh look at and new scholarship on the legacies of late nineteenth-century Symbolist art. The Peggy Guggenheim Collection will be the second venue of the exhibition, after the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (June 30 – October 4, 2017).

Mystical Symbolism is organized by Vivien Greene, Senior Curator, 19th- and Early 20th-Century Art, with the assistance of Ylinka Barotto, Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

In the spring of 1892 Joséphin Péladan (1858–1918), author, critic, and Rosicrucian, organized the first Salon de la Rose+Croix at the Galerie Durand-Ruel in Paris. Showcasing mystical Symbolist art, particularly a hermetic and spiritually devoted vein favored by the eccentric Péladan, the annual Salons were cosmopolitan in reach and served as a crossroads, gathering the work of artists from Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland. Benefiting from extensive research to identify artworks shown in the original exhibitions, *Mystical Symbolism* will encompass painting, work on paper, and sculpture by artists such as Antoine Bourdelle, Rogelio de Egusquiza, Jean Delville, Charles Filiger, Fernand Khnopff, Charles Maurin, Alphonse Osbert, Armand Point, Georges Rouault, Carlos Schwabe, Alexandre Séon, Jan Toorop, Ville Vallgren, and Félix Vallotton.

Mystical Symbolism provides an opportunity to explore the diverse and sometimes opposing concepts that informed Symbolism in the 1890s. Hinging on central artworks shown at each Salon, the exhibition will tease out seminal tropes, such as the role of Orpheus, adulation of the 15th-century early Renaissance Italian painters known as the Primitives, and the cult of personality that developed around figures including Richard Wagner and Péladan himself. A musical component with work by Erik Satie and others underscores the key role occupied by composers for the movement.

Previous exhibitions on the Symbolist movement have focused primarily on a nationality or a broad theme, rather than on a specific event like the cultish Péladan's Salon de la Rose+Croix. The participants' diverging ideologies, ranging from politically conservative and Catholic to radically anarchist and anti-clerical, reveal how the varied approaches are dialectically related to the sacred and

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spiritual philosophies that constituted Symbolist art. By tracing the means through which the Salon proposed these impulses, this exhibition investigates the Symbolist precepts attendant in modernism.

The fully illustrated exhibition catalogue will offer new scholarship on the Salon de la Rose+Croix and Symbolism. It will be comprised of essays on the Salon and its main themes (Vivien Greene, Senior Curator, 19th- and Early 20th-Century Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York), the contemporary reception of the salon (Jean-David Jumeau-Lafond, independent scholar), and the connections between Symbolists tenets and those of early 20th-century avant-garde artists (Kenneth E. Silver, Professor of Art History, New York University). The catalogue will also contain a selected bibliography and artist entries authored by emerging scholars.

Daily at 3:30 pm free guided tours will be offered to the public.

Mystical Symbolism: The Salon de la Rose+Croix in Paris, 1892–1897 is supported by the museum's Institutional Patrons - EFG, Lavazza, and the Regione del Veneto, by Guggenheim Intrapresæ and by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection Advisory Board. Furniture in the exhibition, selected personally by Vivien Greene, have been donated by the French design brand Roche Bobois, a world-leader in high quality furnishings. Additional support provided by Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia

Education programs surrounding the exhibition are funded by the Fondazione Araldi Guinetti, Vaduz.

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The logo for Guggenheim Intrapresæ features a stylized 'G' and 'I' intertwined, with 'guggenheim' in a dark grey sans-serif font and 'intrapresæ' in a smaller, orange sans-serif font below it.

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