

Influenced by his views, Hilma af Klint gave up painting geometric compositions. After a two-year hiatus, she instead began portraying the spiritual dimension in watercolors relating to nature, as in the series *On the Viewing of Flowers and Trees*. Thus, when she was more than 60 years old, she was ready to change her entire approach once more. In earlier images, she had contrasted the outer appearance of plants with their essence in geometric form.

This attempt to find a way of portraying the invisible is also present in the works of other abstract artists, including Kandinsky, Malevich and Mondrian. Like Hilma af Klint, they shared a deep interest in spiritualism and theosophy, and looked to art as a pure spiritual expression of what lies beyond the visible world.

Hilma af Klint analyzed both the microcosm and the macrocosm and portrayed them as mirror images of one another. The relationship between them can be summarized with the esoteric motto "as above, so below" and "as within, so without." Her imagery is full of symbols, letters and words. Symbols are like doors into another dimension. For Hilma af Klint, her entire work was about conveying the messages she received, and to shed light on the great existential issues.



Hilma af Klint in her studio on 5 Hamngatan, c. 1895
Hilma af Klint's Archives

OPENING HOURS

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am to 8 pm
Fridays and Saturdays, 10 am to 9 pm
Sundays and public holidays, 10 am to 8 pm
Extraordinary opening November 4th from 10 am to 3 pm
The Museum will be closed on December 9th and 25th and January 1st

ADMISSION FEES

Permanent collection: 6 euros
Temporary exhibition: 4.5 euros
Combined ticket: 9 euros
Ticket sales stop 30 minutes before closing time

REDUCED FEES (50 %)

Visitors over 65
Students under 26 with valid identification
Groups of 20 people (by appointment)

FREE ADMISSION

Unemployed registered at SEPE
Youths aged 18 and younger children (under 13 accompanied by an adult)
Holders of EURO<
Students of the Universidad de Málaga with valid identification
ICOM members
On Sundays between 6 pm and 8 pm
October 27th, Anniversary of the Museo Picasso Málaga

ADVANCED TICKET SALES

Tickets may be bought in advance at the Museum's website. Advance tickets are retrieved on the day of visit at the Museum's ticket desk, upon compulsory presentation of a credit card and a valid identity card or passport. The Museum and Unicaja decline any liability in the event of loss or theft of tickets. Tickets once bought may not be cancelled, replaced or refunded

Guided visits in Spanish to the exhibition *Hilma af Klint. A Pioneer of Abstraction*
Thursdays at 6 pm. For other guided visits, please contact: educacion@mpicassom.org

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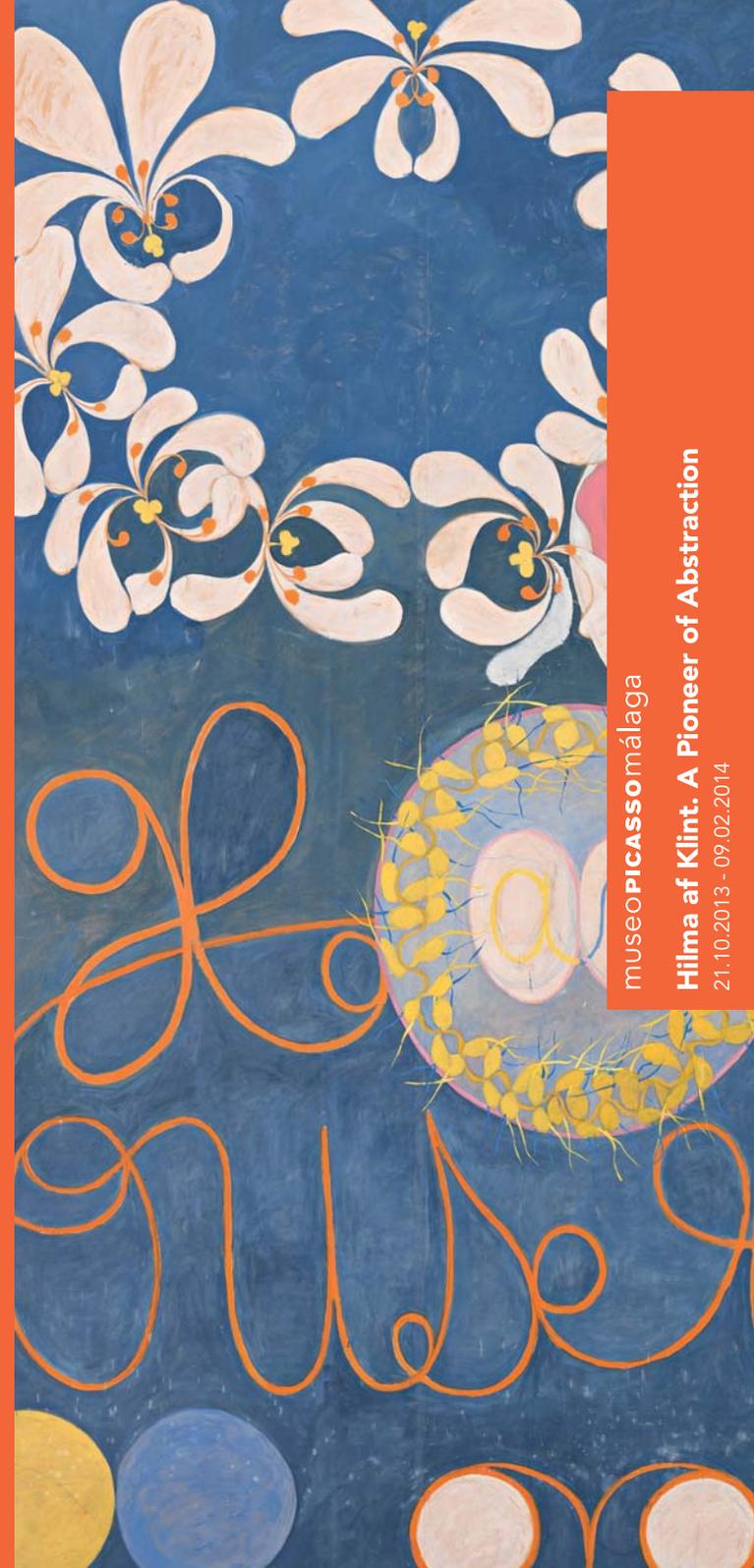
Hilma af Klint (1862–1944)
Group IV, No. 1. *The Ten Largest, Childhood*, 1907
Tempera on paper mounted on canvas, 322 x 239 cm
Stiftelsen Hilma af Klints Verk

THE EXHIBITION IS ORGANIZED BY MODERNA MUSEET, STOCKHOLM, IN COLLABORATION WITH HAMBURGER BAHNHOF – MUSEUM FÜR GEGENWART, BERLIN, MUSEO PICASSO MÁLAGA AND LOUISIANA MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, HUMLEBAEK. CURATOR: IRIS MÜLLER-WESTERMANN. ASSISTANT CURATOR: JO WIDOFF. WITH THE COLLABORATION OF THE SWEDISH EMBASSY AND OBRA SOCIAL "LA CAIXA"

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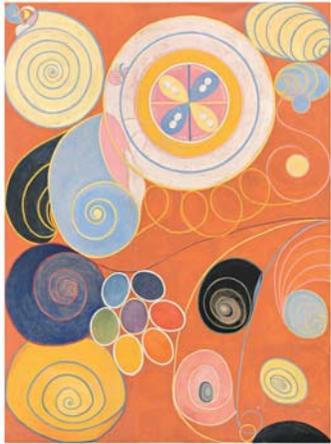
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Hilma af Klint. A Pioneer of Abstraction

21.10.2013 - 09.02.2014



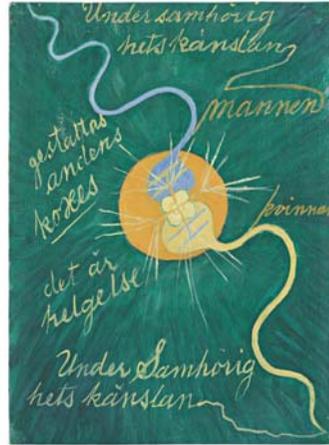
Hilma af Klint (1862–1944)
Group IV, No. 3. *The Ten Largest, Youth*, 1907
Tempera on paper mounted on canvas, 321 x 240 cm
Stiftelsen Hilma af Klints Verk

Hilma af Klint (1862–1944) was a pioneer of art that turned away from visible reality. By 1906, she had developed an abstract imagery. This was several years before Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) and Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935), who are still regarded as the pioneers of twentieth century abstract art, produced their non-figurative work.

She assumed that there was a spiritual dimension to life and aimed at visualizing contexts beyond what the eye can see. When painting, she believed that she was in contact with a higher consciousness that spoke and conveyed messages through her. Like many of her contemporaries, she was influenced by spiritual movements, especially spiritualism, theosophy and later anthroposophy.

Through her paintings, she sought to understand and communicate the various dimensions of human existence. In her will, Hilma af Klint wrote that her abstract works must not be made accessible to the public until at least twenty years after her death. She was convinced that their full meaning could not be understood until then. One hundred years ago, Hilma af Klint painted her pictures for the future.

Hilma af Klint began her art studies at Tekniska Skolan in Stockholm and also had lessons in portrait painting. Between 1882 and 1887, she was a student at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. After graduating and until 1908, she had a studio at Kungsträdgården in central Stockholm. She painted and exhibited portraits and landscapes in a naturalist style. In the late 1870s, Hilma af Klint attended séances, where a medium contacted the dead. There was a great fascination for invisible phenomena at the



Hilma af Klint (1862–1944)
Group I, No. 15. *Primordial Chaos*, 1906–1907
Oil on canvas, 52 x 37 cm
Stiftelsen Hilma af Klints Verk

time. This can be seen in relation to scientific discoveries, such as X-rays that could reveal internal human organs and electromagnetic waves that led to the development of radio and telephony.

In 1896, Hilma af Klint and four other women formed the group "De Fem" [The Five]. They made contact with "high masters" from another dimension and took meticulous notes of their séances. This led to a definite change in Hilma af Klint's art. She began practicing automatic writing, which involves writing without consciously guiding the movement of the hand on the paper. She developed a form of automatic drawing, predating the surrealists by decades. Gradually, she eschewed her naturalist imagery, in an effort to free herself from her academic training. She embarked on an inward journey, into a world that is hidden from most people.

Between 1906 and 1915, Hilma af Klint created her central oeuvre, the *Paintings for the Temple*. It comprises 193 paintings in various series and groups. The overall idea is to convey knowledge of how all is one, beyond the visible dualistic world. The temple to which the title refers does not necessarily relate to an actual building but can rather be seen as a metaphor for spiritual evolution. Hilma af Klint described her process:

The pictures were painted directly through me, without any preliminary drawings, and with great force. I had no idea what the paintings were supposed to depict; nevertheless I worked swiftly and surely, without changing a single brush stroke.

The Ten Largest from 1907 illustrates the four ages of mankind: childhood, youth, maturity and old age. Some words and plant forms are discernible



Hilma af Klint (1862–1944)
Group IX/UW, No. 27. *The Dove*, No. 3, 1915
Oil on canvas, 155.5 x 115.5 cm
Stiftelsen Hilma af Klints Verk

in these otherwise abstract compositions. *Evolution* from 1908 relates to development and processes, to how the world and matter have arisen from the spirit. The suite called *The Swan* was painted in 1914–1915. The swan symbolizes the ethereal in many mythologies and religions. With varying degrees of abstraction, Hilma af Klint explored polarities in these paintings, through a black and a white swan striving for unity. *Altarpieces* sum up all the previous series where the spirit migrates downwards through the material world, before turning upwards again.

In her artistic practice she also continued exploring and trying to understand her earlier work and the greater context of life in general. The *Parsifal* series from 1916 deals with this quest for knowledge. In the first artwork of this series, a voyage through darkness towards the white light at the center of the spiral is depicted. This journey could be said to correspond to the inner voyage that the artist had undertaken when she finished *Paintings for the Temple*.

1920 was an intensely creative year for Hilma af Klint. In several series of small oil paintings, for instance, she explored the great world religions. These are based on duality, that is, a division into opposites, such as good and evil, order and chaos. None of them appeared to Hilma af Klint to attain unity. During her study tours to Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, she encountered the anthroposophical approach to art. According to Rudolf Steiner, anthroposophy strives to see mankind in relation to the spiritual dimensions. It was not just a doctrine to him, but a method for conducting independent research into these spiritual realms.