



“The Swan No. 17” by Hilma af Klint © Stiftelsen Hilma af Klints Verk

# BEYOND THE VISIBLE

## Hilma af Klint

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# BEYOND THE VISIBLE

## Hilma af Klint

### SYNOPSIS

Hilma af Klint was an abstract artist before the term existed, a visionary, trailblazing figure who, inspired by spiritualism, modern science, and the riches of the natural world around her, began in 1906 to reel out a series of huge, colorful, sensual, strange works without precedent in painting. The subject of a recent smash retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum, af Klint was for years an all-but-forgotten figure in art historical discourse, before her long-delayed rediscovery. Director Halina Dryschka's dazzling, course correcting documentary describes not only the life and craft of af Klint, but also the process of her mischaracterization and erasure by both a patriarchal narrative of artistic progress and capitalistic determination of artistic value.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Seldom are there really surprising discoveries. On a quite normal Sunday morning I read the following title in the newspaper: "Art history has to be rewritten." What a great idea in the year 2013! This article was telling about an abstract artist from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who seemed to be completely unknown.

A few months later in Berlin I visited the exhibition "Hilma af Klint - A Pioneer of Abstraction" - and was speechless: exuberant colour compositions and over-dimensional paintings. I was standing in the middle of a hall surrounded by Hilma af Klint's "Ten Largest": Altogether 25 meters of paintings - 3,60 meters high. And beyond these paintings - a whole world.

But why have they been kept from me for so long? I almost felt personally insulted when I read that this was a new discovery and the paintings have been hidden for decades. Could that be true? Paintings in this size are hard to hide. And who would be interested in marginalizing this artist's accomplishments? And why?

Starting the research immediately afterwards I discovered a very different picture of Hilma af Klint: not at all alone or lonely and not hiding her paintings from the world. Here was a woman who consequently followed her own path in life that led to a unique oeuvre. A strong character and despite all restrictions Hilma af Klint explored the possibilities that go beyond the visible. She knew that she was doing something important not only for herself but for many people.

It is more than time to tell the untold heroine stories. And there are many of them. This is one.

This is a film about a truly successful life. A woman who was not dependent of the opinion of others and kept on going her very unique way of living and working. Dedicated to things that matter in everybody's life: How do we want to live? How do we achieve a truly content and fulfilled life? And is that what we see real or do we just think it is real?

Hilma af Klint's oeuvre goes even *beyond art* because she was looking for the whole picture of life. And with that she comes close to the one question: What are we doing here?

# HILMA AF KLINT EXHIBITIONS

## EXHIBITIONS DURING HER LIFETIME

1906

Art- and Industrial Exposition, Norrköping, Sweden.

1907

Art- and Industrial Exposition, Lund, Sweden.

1911

Swedish Female Artists.

Academy of Fine Arts, Stockholm.

1914

The Baltic Exhibition, Malmö, Sweden.

Artists from the Nordic countries, from Balticum, Germany and Russia take part in the exhibition. The Russian exhibition shows the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky.

1928

Friends House

World Conference of Spiritual Art, London, UK

**This was the first exhibition of Hilma af Klint's abstract paintings. All the exhibitions prior had been of her naturalistic paintings.**

## EXHIBITIONS SINCE HER DEATH IN 1944

1986

*The Spiritual in Art*

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art

**This was the first time that any of Hilma af Klint's oeuvre had been shown anywhere in the world in the 42 years since her death.**

1989

*The Secret Pictures by Hilma af Klint*

MoMA, PS 1, New York, USA. January 15 – March 12, 1989

1991 – 1992

*Okkultismus und Abstraktion Die Malerin Hilma af Klint*

*(Occultism and Abstraction of the Painter Hilma af Klint)*

Albertina, Wien, Austria. November 28, 1991 – February 2, 1992

Kulturhaus der Stadt Graz, Austria. February 22 – March 29, 1992

Museum Moderner Kunst, Passau, Germany. April 30 – July 19, 1992

1999 – 2000

*Målningarna till Templet (The Paintings for the Temple)*

Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm. October 30, 1999 – January 09, 2000

Wäinö Aaltonens Museum, Åbo / Turku, Finland. January 26 – March 26, 2000

2006

*An Atom in the Universe*

Camden Arts Centre, London, UK. February 17 – April 16, 2006

2013- 2015

*Hilma af Klint – abstrakt pionjär (Hilma af Klint – A Pioneer of Abstraction)*

Museum of Modern Art, Stockholm.

**This was the exhibition that rocked the art world.**

Also shown in

Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway

KUMU Art Museum, Tallinn, Estonia

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen, Denmark

Helsingfors Konsthall, Sweden

Museo Picasso, Malaga, Spain

Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, Germany

2016

*Hilma af Klint: Painting the Unseen*

Serpentine Galleries, London, UK. March 03 – May 15, 2016

2018

*Hilma af Klint – Mundos Possiveis [Hilma af Klint : Possible Worlds]*

Associacao Pinacoteca Arte e Cultura – APAC, São Paulo, Brazil.

2018 - 2019

*Hilma af Klint : Paintings for the Future*

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA.

October 12, 2018 – April 23, 2019

(167 paintings and 7 notebooks)

Current

*The Hilma af Klint Room*

Permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm

# INTERVIEWEES

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

**Ulla af Klint** - wife of Hilma's nephew Erik

Ulla met Hilma af Klint in her early 20s in Stockholm. She and her husband had a good relationship with her. This is the only existing interview on film with someone who knew Hilma af Klint during her lifetime.

**Johan af Klint** - Grandnephew / Ulla af Klint's son

Johan ran the Hilma af Klint foundation and is also responsible for seeing that her oeuvre stays together.

**Elisabet af Klint** - Grandniece of Hilma af Klint / Ulla af Klint's daughter

**Marie Cassel** - Grandniece of Anna Cassel, Hilma af Klint's closest friend

**Brigitta Giertta** - descendant of Emily Giertta, a close friend of Hilma af Klint

## ARTISTS

**Josiah McElheny** - Artist, New York

An artist and sculptor known for his work with glass blown and assemblages of glass. He did an exhibition with works of Hilma af Klint at the Moderna Museet Stockholm in 2011.

**Monika von Rosen** - Artist

Runs the archive of the "Edelweißförbundet" of which Hilma af Klint was a member for a few years before she founded the group of "The Five". Her great-grandmother and Hilma af Klint were friends.

**Anna Laestadius Larsson** - Novelist

Writer of the novel "Hilma: en roman om gåtan Hilma af Klint" which was published in 2017 in Sweden.

## HISTORIANS AND CRITICS

**Julia Voss** - Art Critic and Historian, Germany

Wrote the article "Art history has to be rewritten" in Germany's most renowned newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In 2020 her biography

on Hilma af Klint will be published. It will be translated into English by the Chicago University Press.

**Iris Müller-Westermann** - Curator at the Moderna Museet Stockholm

As head curator of the Modern Museum Stockholm she curated the first retrospective of Hilma af Klint's oeuvre, showing her most important work in the exhibition "A Pioneer of Abstraction." The exhibition opened in January 2013 and toured through Europe for 4 years. It had more than 1 million visitors.

**Ernst Peter Fischer** - Historian of Science, Germany

A professor of the History of Science at Heidelberg University. Also a writer of over 50 books published in Germany in the field of Natural Sciences, primarily Physics.

**Anna Maria Bernitz** - Art Historian, Sweden

In the '90s she wrote the very first master thesis on Hilma af Klint at the Sorbonne in Paris. She works at the Swedish Institute in Stockholm.

**Eva-Lena Bengtsson** - Art Historian, Royal Academy of Art Stockholm

## COLLECTORS AND GALLERISTS

**Valeria Napoleone** - Collector

London-based and Italian-born, Napoleone collects only works by female artists.

**Ceri Hand** - Gallerist / London

Previously with the Simon Lee Gallery in London and is now director of programmes at Somerset House in London.

# HALINA DYRSCHKA - DIRECTOR

Halina Dyrshka was born in Berlin, Germany and is active as a director and producer. After studying acting, classical singing and film production she founded the company AMBROSIA FILM in Berlin. Her first film as a director the short film "Nineandahalf's Goodbye" was shown at over 40 film festivals worldwide and has won several awards. BEYOND THE VISIBLE – HILMA AF KLINT marks her directorial feature documentary debut and is the first and only film on the Swedish artist Hilma af Klint.

## Filmography

***Beyond the visible – Hilma af Klint*** documentary, 93 min.,

***Message in a bottle*** feature film, 90 min, pre-production

***Déjà Vu*** short film, 2013, 15 min.

***DODO*** short documentary, 2012, 15 min.

***Opera Buffa*** short film 2012, 4:30 min.

***Nineandahalf's Goodbye*** short film 2010, 14 min.

## Awards (selected)

**Leipziger Kinomesse, Audience Award**, Germany

**Special Price of the Jury, Deutscher Hörfilmpreis 2013**, Germany

**Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Preis**, Award for BEST SHORT FILM 2011, Germany

**2 Golden Elephant's**, Int. Film Festival Hyderabad, India

**Best Short Film**, 15th Int. SCHLINGEL Filmfestival Chemnitz 2010, Germany

**Best Children's Short Film**, Kurzfilmfestival Bayreuth "kontraste 2011", Germany

**Special Prize of the Jury**, ROSHD International Film Festival, Teheran, Iran

**Best Short Film**, Festival FESTICINEKIDS Cartagena 2010, Columbia



# BEYOND THE VISIBLE

## Hilma af Klint

PRODUCERS	Eva Illmer, Halina Dyrschka
DIRECTOR/ AUTHOR	Halina Dyrschka
DOP	Alicja Pahl Luana Kripfer
EDITOR	Antje Lass Mario Orias Halina Dyrschka
MUSIC	Damian Scholl
SPEAKER	Petra van der Voort
PARTNERS/ Sponsors	Alex Dewart Kremer Pigmente Manfred Dyrschka
PROTAGONISTS	Johan af Klint, The Hilma af Klint Foundation Julia Voss Ulla af Klint Josiah McEhleny Iris Müller-Westermann Valeria Napoleone Ernst Peter Fischer and more...
LENGTH	93 Min.
FORMAT	HD, colour, 16:9 / DCP
LANGUAGES	English/German/Swedish with English subtitles
PRODUCTION	Ambrosia Film
FUNDING	Kulturelle Filmförderung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Filmwerkstatt Kiel
SHOOTING LOCATIONS	SWEDEN / DENMARK / GERMANY / UK ESTONIA / SWITZERLAND / AUSTRIA

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