
Kandinsky's Universe: 130,000 Visits in Only Thirteen Weeks

Press Release, Potsdam, May 21, 2025

The exhibition *Kandinsky's Universe: Geometric Abstraction in the 20th Century* concluded its thirteen-week run with a total of 131,000 visits. Averaging more than 1,600 visitors per day, the show kept pace with the Museum Barberini's most successful exhibitions, most of which had significantly longer run times. In 2023–24, some 185,000 guests viewed Munch's landscape images over a period of nineteen weeks; in 2019, Picasso's late works drew 168,000 visitors over fourteen weeks. Two years ago, the exhibition on the sun in art was attended by around 167,000 guests over sixteen weeks, while Van Gogh's still lifes attracted ca. 165,000 visitors over fifteen weeks in 2019–20.

Ortrud Westheider, Director of the Museum Barberini, says: "We are delighted that *Kandinsky's Universe* met with such overwhelming enthusiasm from audiences during this short time! With 125 outstanding loans from important collections worldwide, curator Sterre Barentsen demonstrated that abstract art is not cool or devoid of content as is often claimed, but rather colorful, opulent, and sensual. Her concept of using the stations of Kandinsky's life and the phases of his abstract oeuvre to illuminate his immense influence on generations of artists was exciting not only to us, but also to audiences and art critics."

In addition to twelve works by Kandinsky, the exhibition in Potsdam showed paintings, sculptures, and installations by seventy artists throughout two floors of the museum, including rarely seen works by Josef Albers, Sonia Delaunay, Barbara Hepworth, El Lissitzky, Kasimir Malevich, Agnes Martin, Piet Mondrian, Bridget Riley, Frank Stella, and Victor Vasarely. Over forty international lenders contributed to the show, including the Courtauld Gallery, London, the Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, Geneva, the Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, the Hamburger Kunsthalle, the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, the MOMus – Museum of Modern Art – Costakis Collection, Thessaloniki, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

The enthusiastic response to the extensive educational program accompanying *Kandinsky's Universe* also reflects the tremendous interest in the visual worlds of geometric abstraction. A total of 1,100 tours and workshops were offered in conjunction with the exhibition, 200 of them in the final two weeks alone. The multifaceted program of events, which included concerts, conversations, lectures, a short film series, and yoga sessions in the

museum, attracted around 21,000 guests. Free digital resources such as the audio guide, the exhibition website Prolog, and the 360-degree tour offered users a multimedia experience of the show. Video interviews with artists and researchers, screened in the museum and available on the website and on social media, focused on the themes and protagonists of geometric abstraction.

At the Museum Barberini, *Kandinsky's Universe* will be followed by the exhibition *The Honest Eye: Camille Pissarro's Impressionism*, organized in cooperation with the Denver Art Museum and presented from June 14 to September 28, 2025. With some 100 landscapes, city views, still lifes, and figural images from around fifty collections and museums including the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, the Tate, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, the retrospective offers a comprehensive overview of Pissarro's oeuvre and illuminates the social-utopian ideas that informed his art.

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