

T1312

NC 0020536 2



M0058021NC

National College of Art and Design
Faculty of Fine Art, Department of Print.

The Development of Abstraction Through Spiritual Ideas.

By Dymphna Curry

Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art and
Design and Complimentary studies in
Candidacy for the Degree of Bachelor of
Arts in Fine Art Print, 1994

University of California, Los Angeles
Department of Education

The Development of Abstract Thought Through Spiritual Ideas.

By Raymond C. Barker

Submitted to the Faculty of Education
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
April 1934

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Plates

Introduction	.....	1
Chapter One	.....	3
Chapter Two	.....	24
Conclusion	.....	46
Endnotes	.....	48
Bibliography	.....	49

LIST OF PLATES

- Plate No. 1 The Fallen Angel, 1871.
- Plate No. 2 The Cactus Man, 1881.
- Plate No. 3 Head of a Martyr on a platter, 1877.
- Plate No. 4 'Blossoming', In Dream, 1879.
- Plate No. 5 "When awakenings in the depths of obscure
 matter," Origins, 1883.
- Plate No. 6 "Anthony: What is the object of all this?
 Devil: There is no object."
 The temptation of St. Anthony 1896.
- Plate No 7 The fallen Angel, 1905.
- Plate No 8 The Singer, 1903.
- Plate No 9 First abstract watercolour, 1910.
- Plate No 10 All Saints, 1911.
- Plate No 11 Deluge and the last judgement, 1913.
- Plate No 12 Abstraction red corner, 1914.
- Plate No 13 Improvisations, No. 26 (Rowing), 1913.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to illustrate how abstract art developed through spiritual ideas. In order to prove this , I have chosen two artists, Odilon Redon and Wassily Kandinsky, whose body of work in the early twentieth century redefined the boundaries of modern art , which in turn lead to abstraction, changing forever the history of painting .

Abstract art remains misunderstood by a large majority of the general public. It is thought to be meaningless. It's foundations are in fact, laid down by ancient history and religions. Their concern with the spiritual development in the individual , resulted in reaching towards a higher state of consciousness.

This thesis has been divided into two chapters. Chapter one begins by providing a brief background history of Redon. By assessing the impact of both his charcoal and lithographic medium I have illustrated their importance as an essential part of Redon's development. By examining the events that lead to Redon's success as an artist it has been possible to prove how his work had a high literary content automatically identifying him with the Symbolists movement.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to illustrate how abstract art developed through spiritual ideas. In order to prove this, I have chosen two artists, Odilon Redon and Wassily Kandinsky, whose body of work in the early twentieth century redefined the boundaries of modern art, which in turn led to abstraction, changing forever the history of painting.

Abstract art remains misunderstood by a large majority of the general public. It is thought to be meaningless. Its foundations are in fact, laid down by ancient history and religions. Their concern with the spiritual development of the individual, resulted in reaching towards a higher state of consciousness.

This thesis has been divided into two chapters. Chapter one begins by providing a brief background history of Redon. By assessing the impact of both his charcoal and lithographic medium I have illustrated their importance as an essential part of Redon's development. By examining the events that led to Redon's success as an artist it has been possible to prove how his work had a high literary content, automatically identifying him with the Symbolist movement.

Chapter two discusses Kandinsky. Whose writings were the basis for a new way of thinking about art. He created a language that explained the essence and spirit contained in his work. In doing this Kandinsky created a meaning which was concrete. In this thesis I wish to explore these meanings and ideas in relation to the coming about of abstract art.

Chapter Two discusses Kandinsky. Whose writings were the basis for a new way of thinking about art. He created a language that explained the essence and spirit contained in his work. In doing this Kandinsky created a meaning which was concrete. In this thesis I wish to explore these meanings and ideas in relation to the coming about of abstract art.

CHAPTER ONE

Redon, one of the first Symbolists, was born in 1840 in Bordeaux and brought up on his family estate by his uncle. From an early age he showed an interest in painting. His first painting tutor Stanislas Gorin, was a watercolor painter. In 1859 Redon moved to Paris to begin a course in architecture at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts. He disliked what he was doing so instead went on to study under the painter Gérôme. Their relationship was recorded by Redon as being an unhappy one, which resulted in Redon leaving and returning to Bordeaux. Perhaps he left because he felt that his own young spirit was under threat of being spoiled by traditional style values which were expected of him. This move that was to be the turning point of his career. It was in Bordeaux where he met the two men who were to have a great influence on him; Armand Clavand and an engraver called Bresdin, Clavand, a botanist, showed Redon the use of microcopy and introduced him to contemporary literature, such as the works of Baudelaire and Poe. Redon began to work in Bresdin's studio and learnt the techniques of print making from him. Bresdin led a bohemian lifestyle and, as Hobbs explains, had "an attitude toward success as an artist that provided some comfort in his own failure" (Hobbs, R., 1977, PG14). The common views shared by Bresdin and Redon

CHAPTER ONE

Redon, one of the first Symbolists, was born in 1840 in Bordeaux and brought up on his family estate by his uncle. From an early age he showed an interest in painting. His first painting tutor Stanislas Gorin, was a watercolor painter. In 1859 Redon moved to Paris to begin a course in architecture at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts. He disliked what he was doing so instead went on to study under the painter Gérôme. Their relationship was recorded by Redon as being an unhappy one, which resulted in Redon leaving and returning to Bordeaux. Perhaps he left because he felt that his own young spirit was under threat of being spoiled by traditional style values which were expected of him. This move that was to be the turning point of his career. It was in Bordeaux where he met the two men who were to have a great influence on him; Armand Clavaud and an engraver called Bressin. Clavaud, a botanist, showed Redon the use of microscopy and introduced him to contemporary literature, such as the works of Baudelaire and Poe. Redon began to work in Bressin's studio and learnt the techniques of print making from him. Bressin led a bohemian lifestyle and, as Hobbs explains, had "an attitude towards success as an artist that provided some comfort in his own failure" (Hobbs, R., 1977, p.14). The common views shared by Bressin and Redon

concerned imitation and invention in the visual arts . By imitation they understood the copying from the real world and nature, while invention was where the image draws both from the imaginary and real world creating the imaginary, and one could not exist without the other.

In 1868, Redon wrote three articles for the Bordeaux newspaper La Gironde, reviewing the Salon in Paris. The painters exhibiting included Manet , Monet, Pissarro and Renoir. Emile Zola in reviewing the exhibition, praised the work of these young artists while Redon condemned them for excluding imagination from their work and by doing so were responsible for preventing painting from moving forward, away from traditional styles. Redon does not deny the fact that the paintings were excellent imitations of nature, but that was all they were , imitations without the use of invention. As Redon has written; "view shows, " a painter who produces from his head and his eyes only an illusory relief and who makes of his vital brilliance something neutral and animal like, incapable of turning inward "(Braziller, G., 1986, PG.86.) that any painter who has neglected to look inwards for inspiration, has achieved nothing, and it is the role of the artist to do both. In

concerned imitation and invention in the visual arts. By imitation they understood the copying from the real world and nature, while invention was where the image draws both from the imaginary and real world creating the imaginary, and one could not exist without the other.

In 1888, Redon wrote three articles for the Bordeaux newspaper *La Gironde*, reviewing the Salon in Paris. The painters exhibiting included Manet, Monet, Pissarro and Renoir. Emile Zola in reviewing the exhibition, praised the work of these young artists while Redon condemned them for excluding imagination from their work and by doing so were responsible for preventing painting from moving forward, away from traditional styles. Redon does not deny the fact that the paintings were excellent imitations of nature, but that was all they were, imitations without the use of invention. As Redon has written; view shows, "a painter who produces from his head and his eyes only an illusory relief and who makes of his vital brilliance something neutral and animal like, incapable of turning inward" (Braziller, G., 1982, p.86.) that any painter who has neglected to look inwards for inspiration, has achieved nothing, and it is the role of the artist to do both. In

1869 Redon published his fourth article in La Gironde, entitled Rodolphe Bresdin where he gives an account of the life and works of Bresdin , and reaffirmed his beliefs as expressed in the articles on the Salon.

It was not until 1870 that Redon's work began to develop. By excluding colour altogether Redon was able to concentrate on his charcoal drawings, such as *The Fallen Angel* 1871 which can be compared with his earlier work *The Ford* 1865. Redon introduces an imaginary world while using a religious theme, *The Fallen Angel* portrays an image that has a strange beauty and suggests unhappiness with a feeling of isolation and sadness. Redon achieves this by the way in which the angels head is slightly down turned, with wings that are dark and look like they are made of stone. It could perhaps be suggested the angel represents Redon's own personal sadness but there is no written evidence to substantiate this theory . His use of the charcoal medium is very effective, not only in building up textures, but the different tonal effects he achieves gives off a melancholic feeling. The charcoal drawings from the 1870's which included *Captive Pegasus* 1889, *The Enchanted Forest* 1875, *Angel And Demon* 1875, are what Redon later called his

1869 Redon published his fourth article in *La Girouette*, entitled *Josephine's Dream*, where he gives an account of the life and work of Bressan, and reaffirmed his beliefs as expressed in the articles on the Salon.

It was not until 1870 that Redon's work began to develop. By excluding colour altogether Redon was able to concentrate on his charcoal drawings, such as *The Fallen Angel* 1871 which can be compared with his earlier work *The Ford* 1868. Redon introduces an imaginary world while using a religious theme, *The Fallen Angel* portrays an image that has a strange beauty and suggests unhappiness with a feeling of isolation and sadness. Redon achieves this by the way in which the angel's head is slightly down turned, with wings that are bare and look like they are made of stone. It could perhaps be suggested the angel represents Redon's own personal sadness but there is no written evidence to substantiate this theory. His use of the charcoal medium is very effective, not only in building up textures, but the different tonal effects he achieves gives off a melancholic feeling. The charcoal drawings from the 1870's which included *Captive Pegasus* 1869, *The Enchanted Forest* 1875, *Angel And Demon* 1875, are what Redon later called his



Plate No. 1 The Fallen Angel, 1871.



Plate No. 1

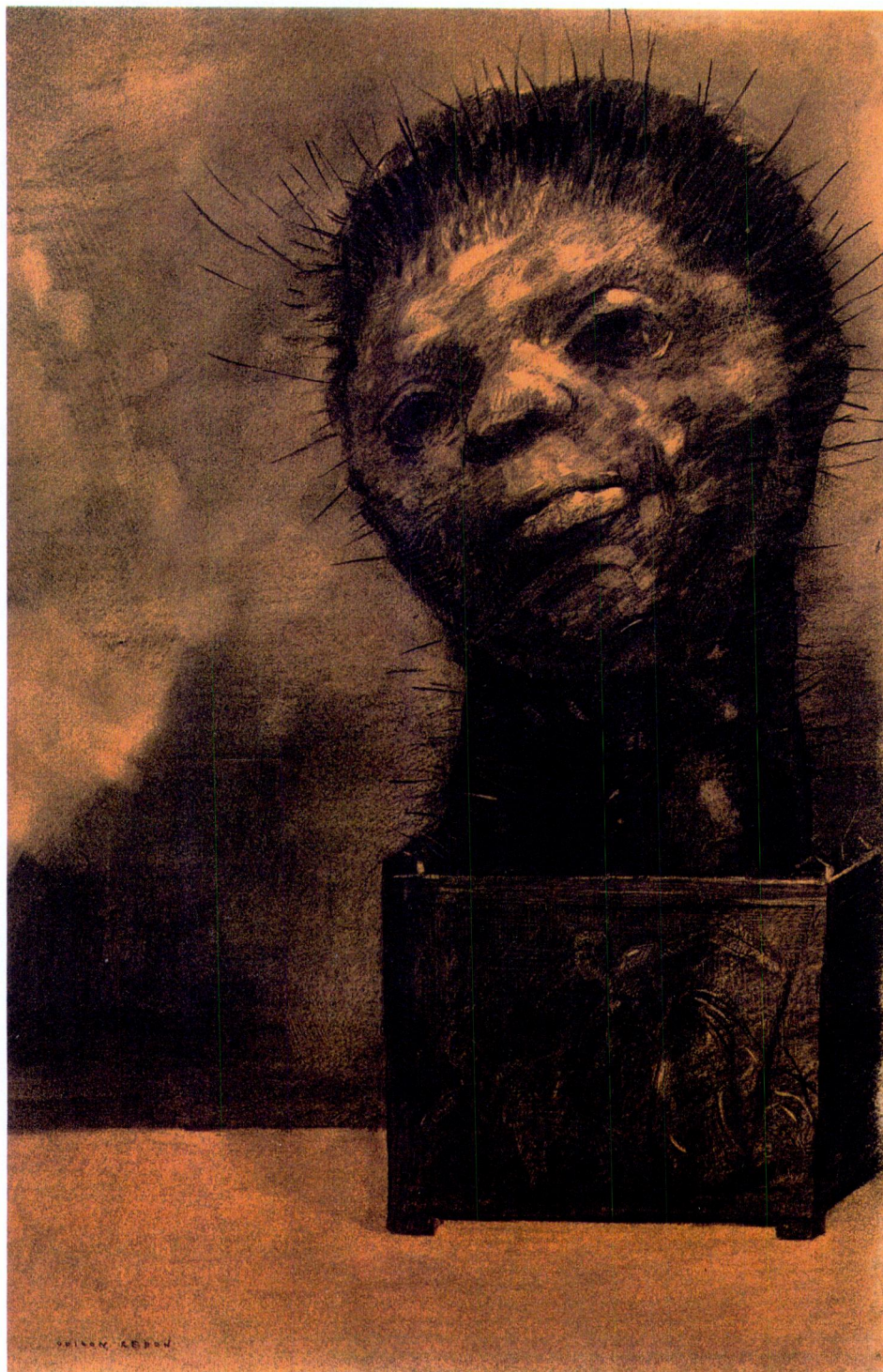


Plate No. 2 The Cactus Man, 1881.

'Noirs' . They were executed in black and white with subject matter that was from a suggestive, imaginary world. It was this imagery that was to dominate his work until he began to use colour in the 1890's.

The strength of Redon's work lies in his use of the medium; by creating a deliberate vagueness of detail and by exploring suggestive tonal values, Redon evokes a sense of mystery and transforms his images into works of great imagination. By 1880 Redon was taking natural recognizable forms and distorting them, introducing unnatural creatures ,nurtured and bred in his own imagination. The *Smiling Spider* 1881, and *the Cactus Man* of 1881 are effective examples of this. Redon has taken a familiar object and shape, respectively and combined the two. As he himself wrote " all my originality consist then of making improbable beings come to life humanly according to the laws of the probable " "putting as far as possible the logic of the visible at the service of the invisible "(Braziller, G., 1986, PG.28). What makes these images so disturbing is that they have a human aspect to them which the spectator can relate to while being horrified by its grotesque monster - like expressions.

'Noirs'. They were executed in black and white with subject matter that was from a suggestive, imaginary world. It was this imagery that was to dominate his work until he began to use colour in the 1890's.

The strength of Redon's work lies in his use of the medium, by creating a deliberate vagueness of detail and by exploring suggestive tonal values, Redon evokes a sense of mystery and transforms his images into works of great imagination. By 1880 Redon was taking natural recognizable forms and distorting them, introducing unnatural creatures, mutated and bred in his own imagination. The Smiling Spider 1881, and the Cartas Man of 1881 are effective examples of this. Redon has taken a familiar object and shape, respectively and combined the two. As he himself wrote "all my originality consist then of making improbable beings come to life humanly according to the laws of the probable" "putting as far as possible the logic of the visible at the service of the invisible" (Braziller, G., 1986, PG.28). What makes these images so disturbing is that they have a human aspect to them which the spectator can relate to while being horrified by its grotesque monster-like expressions.

During this time Redon continued with religious and mythological themes. Although in the drawings of *Head of martyr on a platter* 1877 Redon does not reveal the identity of the martyr, earlier works by Puvis De Chavannes and Gustave Moreau would suggest that it is the head of John the Baptist. Redon's positions the head floating out of context as if surviving without the remainder of its body, (like the ..*Head Of Orpheus Floating On The Waters*, 1881, and *The Apparition* of 1883), thus creating very powerful imagery. Fifteen years of using black and white expressed most effectively the pessimism that dominated his thinking and communicated itself in his work. The use of charcoal enabled Redon to eliminate distractions which might have occurred with the use of color.

Redon's 'Noirs' were an essential part of his development but they were difficult to reproduce. As a result Redon turned to lithography, which acted as a perfect equivalent to his charcoal medium. Lithography made it possible to edition his work thus enabling him to bring his images before a larger public. Redon also asserted that he used lithography "with the sole aim of producing in the spectator an over - powering interest in the uncertainties of the dark world." (Braziller, G., 1986, PG.10) Redon's

During this time Redon continued with religious and mythological themes. Although in the drawings of *Head as Martyr* on a platter 1877 Redon does not reveal the identity of the martyr, earlier works by Paul de Chavannes and Gustave Moreau would suggest that it is the head of John the Baptist. Redon's position the head floating out of context as if surviving without the remainder of its body, (like the *Head of Orpheus Floating On The Waters*, 1881, and the *Apparition of 1883*), thus creating very powerful imagery. Fifteen years of using black and white expressed most effectively the pessimism that dominated his thinking and communicated itself in his work. The use of charcoal enabled Redon to eliminate distractions which might have occurred with the use of color.

Redon's *'Voix'* were an essential part of his development but they were difficult to reproduce. As a result Redon turned to lithography, which acted as a perfect equivalent to his charcoal medium. Lithography made it possible to edition his work thus enabling him to bring his images before a larger public. Redon also asserted that he used lithography "with the sole aim of producing in the spectator an overpowering interest in the uncertainties of the dark world."

Brasiller, G., 1986, PG.10) Redon's



Plate No. 3 Head of a Martyr on a platter, 1877.



Plate No. 3.

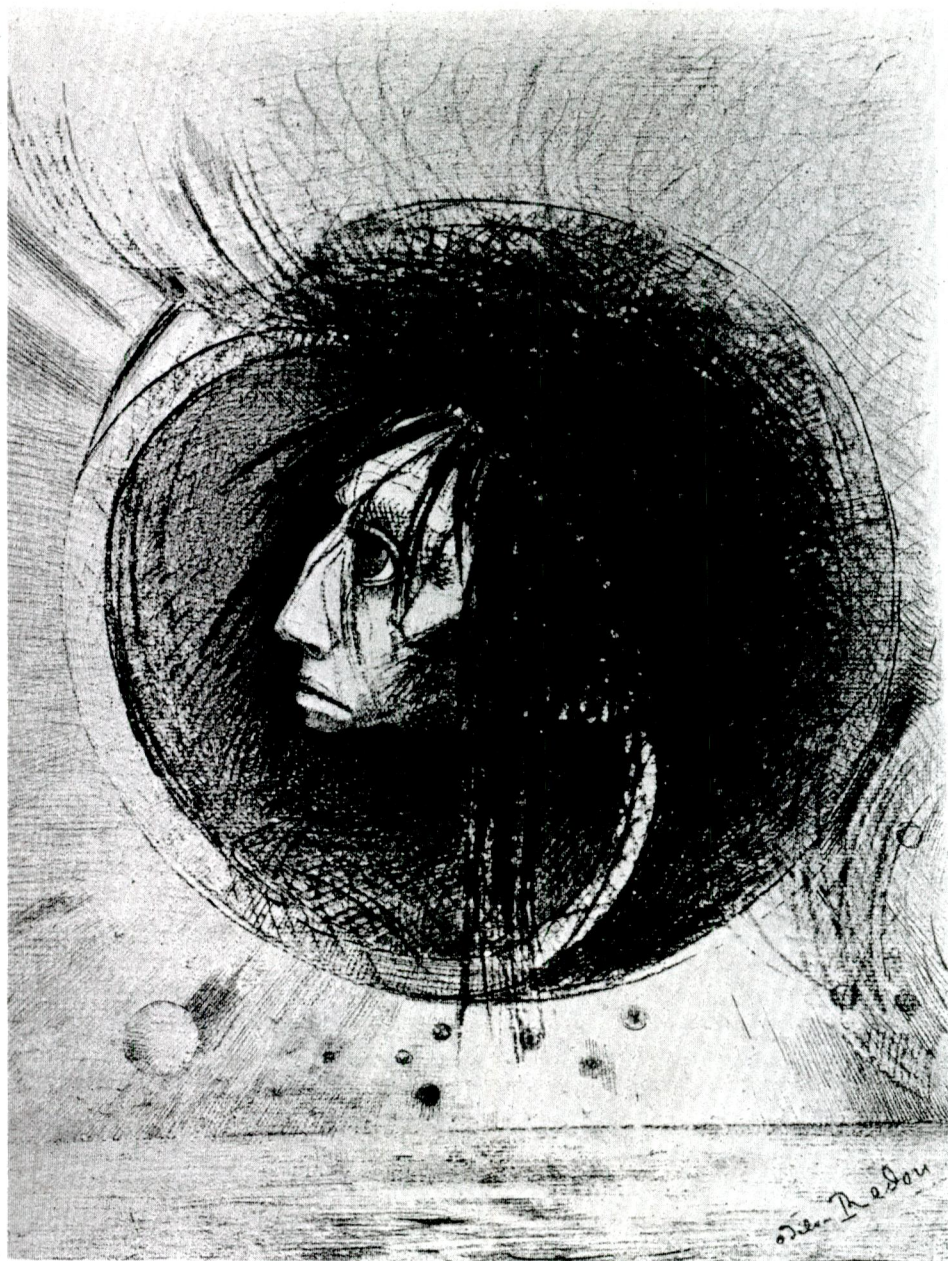


Plate No. 4 'Blossoming', In Dream, 1879.



Plate No. 4

first lithographic album , entitled In Dream 1879 , was based on his earlier charcoal drawing, in which he achieved the same textural and tonal qualities. They include images of floating severed heads and a floating eye. The titles along side " In Dream " gives some inclination that the subject matter is from different stretches of the human mind. Redon describes his own work as " imaginative and un disciplined ". The album includes *Blossoming* with its familiar floating severed head, cocooned inside a floating air bubble , *Sad Asent*, again the image is both imaginary and human.

At this time in Paris, Redon was not readily identified with any particular style or nineteenth century movement. He found it difficult to exhibit at the Salon since their tastes were very different, and Redon's work was a far cry from the work of the Impressionists. However in 1881 Redon held his first one man exhibition in the offices of La Vie Moderne and in 1882 he held his second exhibition, this time at La Gualois. From this time onward his attitude toward success began to change. While exhibiting at La Vie Moderne, Redon was introduced to J.K.Huymans who wrote for the same paper. Both Huymans and Emile Hennequin (another literary critic) reviewed Redon's exhibitions (of 1881 and 1882).

first lithographic album, entitled In Dream, 1879, was based on his earlier charcoal drawing, in which he achieved the same textural and tonal qualities. They include images of floating severed heads and a floating eye. The titles along side "In Dream" gives some indication that the subject matter is from different stretches of the human mind. Redon described his own work as "imaginative and un disciplined". The album includes Blossoming with its familiar floating severed head, cocooned inside a floating air bubble, Sad Ascent, again the image is both imaginary and human.

At this time in Paris, Redon was not readily identified with any particular style or nineteenth century movement. He found it difficult to exhibit at the Salon since their taste were very different, and Redon's work was a far cry from the work of the Impressionists. However in 1881 Redon held his first one man exhibition in the offices of La Vie Moderne and in 1882 he held his second exhibition, this time at La Galigny. From this time onward his attitude toward success began to change. While exhibiting at La Vie Moderne, Redon was introduced to J.K. Huysmans who wrote for the same paper. Both Huysmans and Emile Zola (another literary critic) reviewed Redon's exhibitions (of 1881 and 1882).

Hennequin proclaimed Redon to be the leader of a new art movement, the Decadences. As a result of this Redon was automatically identified with the literary avant - garde, which brought about his involvement with the French Symbolists.

Symbolism began first as a literary movement in France appearing in poetry and eventually spreading to the visual arts. It resulted from a group of French poets breaking ties with the philosophies that dominated art by drawing upon creative originality that went beyond previous ideas. The movement emerged in the late 1880's, creating an art that , as the Lamplight Collection refer to as , " reflected not what the eye saw but what the observer felt "(Lamplight Collection, 1975, PG.4) It was a turning away from Impressionism by seeking to reintroduce meaning into art. The poet who is seen as being the greatest of all the Symbolist poets, was Charles Baudelaire¹, who wrote of the

sensation of spiritual and physical bliss of isolation , something infinitely great and infinitely beautiful of an intensity of light which rejoices the eyes and the soul until they swoon " and a " sensation of space reaching to the furthest conceivable limits (Tuchman, M., 1986. PG. 32).

Poets who followed, such as Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé and Arthur Rimband, were all greatly influenced by him. The

Hanneguin proclaimed Redon to be the leader of a new art movement, the Decadences. As a result of this Redon was automatically identified with the literary avant-garde, which brought about his involvement with the French Symbolists.

Symbolism began first as a literary movement in France appearing in poetry and eventually spreading to the visual arts. It resulted from a group of French poets breaking ties with the philosophies that dominated art by drawing upon creative originality that went beyond previous ideas. The movement emerged in the late 1880's, creating an art that, as the Lamplight Collection refers to as, "reflected not what the eye saw but what the observer felt" (Lamplight Collection, 1975, PG.4) It was a turning away from Impressionism by seeking to reintroduce meaning into art. The poet who is seen as being the greatest of all the Symbolist poets, was Charles Baudelaire, who wrote of the

sensation of spiritual and physical bliss of isolation, something infinitely great and infinitely beautiful of an intensity of light which rejoices the eyes and the soul until they swoon "and a "sensation of space reaching to the furthest conceivable limits (Tuchman, M., 1986, PG. 32).

Poets who followed, such as Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé and Arthur Rimbaud, were all greatly influenced by him. The

literary symbolists began to grow and having achieved an identity of their own they went in search of artists within another creative field who echoed their symbolists views.

Redon's success as a visual artist was minor ,until his work was recognized as having a literary content. This could have been because he deliberately neglected to represent the real world and explored the possibilities of the subjective world instead. By creating work that looked inward for inspiration and needed to be felt rather than be merely looked at, Redon's work was seen as compatible with the literary Symbolists. According to H.B Chipp, for the Symbolists " the greatest reality lay in the realm of the imagination and fantasy."(Chipp, B., H., 1968, PG.49) Feelings were the starting point for a work of art. Huymans wrote the novel A Rebours in 1884. It caused a significant scandal expressing the new feelings of the movement which amounted to a pessimistic rejection of the natural world. He also mentioned the work of Gustave Moreau, and Redon. As a result of this Redon gained a reputation among the literary intellectuals, who were interested enough to go to view his work. It would be fair to say, therefore that the recognition Redon gained had a lot to do with Huymans and the literary reviews he got from his exhibitions. This

literary symbolists began to grow and having achieved an identity of their own they went in search of artists within another creative field who echoed their symbolist views.

Redon's success as a visual artist was minor, until his work was recognized as having a literary content. This could have been because he deliberately neglected to represent the real world and explored the possibilities of the subjective world instead. By creating work that looked inward for inspiration and needed to be felt rather than be merely looked at, Redon's work was seen as compatible with the literary symbolists. According to H.B. Chipp, for the symbolists "the greatest reality lay in the realm of the imagination and fantasy." (Chipp, B., H., 1968, p. 49) Feelings were the starting point for a work of art. Huysmans wrote the novel Le roman expérimental in 1884. It caused a significant scandal expressing the new feelings of the movement which amounted to a pessimistic rejection of the natural world. He also mentioned the work of Gustave Moreau, and Redon. As a result of this Redon gained a reputation among the literary intellectuals, who were interested enough to go to view his work. It would be fair to say, therefore that the recognition Redon gained had a lot to do with Huysmans and the literary reviews he got from his exhibitions. This

recognition began to affect his style. He began to incorporate some features from the movement into his work , almost as if he was acknowledging their support. His next lithographic album in 1882 was titled , To Edgar Poe . By choosing such a literary title it may seem that Redon was attempting to exploit his success, by connecting Poe's success with his own.

It is evident in his next lithographic album, Origins in 1883, that Redon was no longer aiming his work towards his literary colleagues. He began to distort animal forms to create imaginary beings². The works reintroduce the monster like themes similar to that of the *Smiling Spider* of 1881. His studies show evidence of the use of a microscope introduced to Redon by Clavand. The images are of underdeveloped creatures, such as in *When life was awakening in the depths of obscure matter*, Origins 1883.

Although Redon did not mix in Parisian artistic circles, he did become friends with members of the Nabis, a group of young artists, a generation behind him. Initially influenced by Gauguin, they were concerned with mystic aims. The group included , Paul Sérusier, Pierre Bonnard and Maurice Denis. In Denis s' painting *Homage To Cézanne* of 1900, it is

recognition began to affect his style. He began to incorporate some features from the movement into his work, almost as if he was acknowledging their support. His next lithographic album in 1882 was titled, To Edgar Poe. By choosing such a literary title it may seem that Redon was attempting to exploit his success, by connecting Poe's success with his own.

It is evident in his next lithographic album, Origins in 1883, that Redon was no longer aiming his work towards his literary colleagues. He began to distort animal forms to create imaginary beings. The works reintroduce the monster like themes similar to that of the Smiling Spider of 1881. His studies show evidence of the use of a microscope introduced to Redon by Clavaud. The images are of underdeveloped creatures, such as in When life was awakening in the depths of obscure matter, Origins, 1883.

Although Redon did not mix in Parisian artistic circles, he did become friends with members of the Nabis, a group of young artists, a generation behind him. Initially influenced by Gauguin, they were concerned with mystic aims. The group included, Paul Serusier, Pierre Bonnard and Maurice Denis. In Denis's painting Homage To Cezanne of 1900, it is

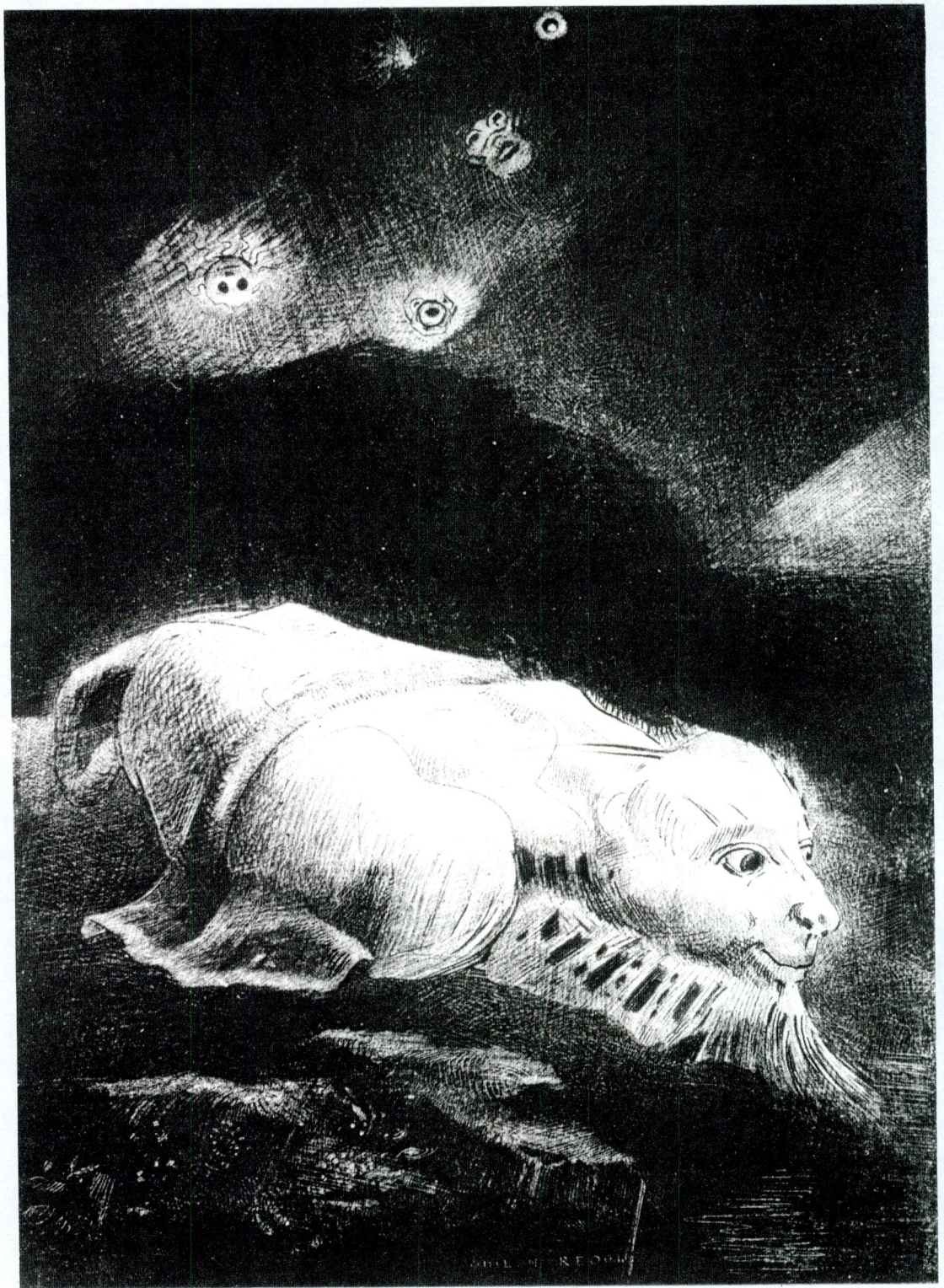


Plate No. 5 "When awakenings in the depths of obscure
matter," Origins, 1883.



Plate No. 2

Redon who is standing to the very left of the painting, the other figures are turned to face him as if they are paying homage to him rather than to Cézanne. For the Nabis ,it was Redon work that suggested mystery and the spiritual and it is this that attracted them to him. Redon's work seemed to echo their ideas. "Everywhere men are claiming the right to dream, the right to pastures of the sky "(Gowing, Lawrence, 1988, PG.3) Both Bonnard and Denis wrote about Redon , believing he had achieved his aim through the use of the imagination. The reputation Redon gained within the Nabis, contributed to his career at the time because it meant his works were being introduced to younger painters. This resulted in publicity for him in La Revue Blanche and Le Figaro. through this publicity Redon was commissioned to make front pieces for A Rebours (Against Nature) 1888 , Adrian Remacle's La Passante (The passing soul) in 1891 , and for Ferdinand Hérold's Chevaleries Sentimentales (Lays of knights and love) in 1893.

From 1890 a change in Redon's work emerged when his melancholy and monstrous creatures, emphasized in his earlier 'Noirs' began to disappear from his work. This change in the treatment of subject matter is quite evident in Redon's lithographic albums; The Temptation of Saint

Redon who is standing to the very left of the painting, the other figures are turned to face him as if they are paying homage to him rather than to Cézanne. For the Nabla, it was Redon work that suggested mystery and the spiritual and it is this that attracted them to him. Redon's work seemed to echo their ideas. "Everywhere men are claiming the right to dream, the right to pastures of the sky" (Gowing, Lawrence, 1988, pg.3) Both Bonnard and Denis wrote about Redon, believing he had achieved his aim through the use of the imagination. The reputation Redon gained within the Nabla, contributed to his career at the time because it meant his works were being introduced to younger painters. This resulted in publicity for him in La Revue Blanche and Le Figaro. Through this publicity Redon was commissioned to make front pieces for A Rebours (Against Nature) 1888, Adrian Remacle's La Passante (The passing soul) in 1891, and for Ernest Herold's Chevaleries Sentimentales (Days of knights and love) in 1893.

From 1890 a change in Redon's work emerged when his melancholy and monstrous creatures, emphasized in his earlier work, began to disappear from his work. This change in the treatment of subject matter is quite evident in Redon's lithographic albums; The Temptation of Saint

Antony of 1888, the Apocalypse To Saint John 1889, and To Gustave Flaubert in 1889. The images from the first album are mainly taken from Flaubert's literary version of the same theme. In Redon's image *Buddha* of 1895, he uses a caption taken almost directly from Flaubert's writing. Why did Redon equate his images with such literary sources ? It is reasonable to assume that it was because of his own deep interest in religious and mythological imagery. Flaubert's literature which was also both descriptive and suggestive of the religious and the mythological imagery, was to be of inspiration to the artist. Here again it can be noted the influence literature had on Redon's work . It is also quite evident that Redon used Flaubert's descriptive passages to coincide with his own image making. Because of the album titles and their religious connections, it must be emphasised that they are not intended in anyway to represent any one religion ,but to represent the spiritual in general. This can be seen as Redon's attempt to unite all religions to form one . In so doing he creates a bonding between his images and literature.

Having spent nearly twenty years working in black and white Redon knew only too well how to achieve the tonal textured effects that were suggestive. By the late 1890's Redon's

Autony of 1888, The Apocalypse To Saint John 1889, and To Gustave Flaubert in 1889. The images from the first album are mainly taken from Flaubert's literary version of the same theme. In Redon's image Buddha of 1895, he uses a caption taken almost directly from Flaubert's writing. Why did Redon equate his images with such literary sources? It is reasonable to assume that it was because of his own deep interest in religious and mythological imagery. Flaubert's literature which was also both descriptive and suggestive of the religious and the mythological imagery, was to be of inspiration to the artist. Here again it can be noted the influence literature had on Redon's work. It is also quite evident that Redon used Flaubert's descriptive passages to coincide with his own image making. Because of the album titles and their religious connections, it must be emphasised that they are not intended in anyway to represent any one religion, but to represent the spiritual in general. This can be seen as Redon's attempt to unite all religions to form one. In so doing he creates a bonding between his images and literature.

Having spent nearly twenty years working in black and white Redon knew only too well how to achieve the tonal textured effects that were suggestive. By the late 1890's Redon's



Plate No. 6 "Anthony: What is the object of all this?
Devil: There is no object."
The temptation of St. Anthony 1896.



Plate 9 of 10

works were indeed changing and it was inevitable that he went on to explore colour as a medium this resulted in a new beginning breaking away from the past and almost laying his 'Noirs' to rest. His melancholic pessimistic phase had led to optimism. With the use of colour that began to dominate his work, the figures became irrelevant, leaving colour to take over and evoke the inner feeling of mystery. The outcome of this introduction of colour was to bring about a joyful mode of expression while still rendering the mythological theme. A good example of this is *the cyclops* painting of 1898 - 1900 and *the Chariot of Apollo*. In the Saloon d'Automne Redon exhibited in 1904 alongside Cezanne and Puvis de Chavannes and Renoir. Besides his colour work Redon included some of his earlier 'Noirs'. As a result he received bad press, it would seem that those who already knew of his earlier works thought that one took away from the other. His 'Noirs' of course would have been easily associated with the decadence period which seemed to drown out the rest and prevented the critics from really appreciating his new colour works. The 1904 exhibition did nothing to promote Redon's success. What did emerge as a result of the exhibition, was Redon's move to exploring the possibilities of colour to every extent and making his floral studies more dominating in his painting. The flower

works were indeed changing and it was inevitable that he went on to explore colour as a medium this resulted in a new beginning breaking away from the past and almost laying his 'Voies' to rest. His melancholic pessimistic phase had led to optimism. With the use of colour that began to dominate his work, the figures became irrelevant, leaving colour to take over and evoke the inner feeling of mystery. The outcome of this introduction of colour was to bring about a joyful mode of expression while still rendering the mythological theme. A good example of this is the cypress painting of 1898 - 1900 and the Christ of Apollon. In the Salon d'Automne Redon exhibited in 1904 alongside Cézanne and Pissarro, Chavannes and Renoir. Besides his colour work Redon included some of his earlier 'Voies'. As a result he received bad press, it would seem that those who already knew of his earlier work thought that one look away from the other. His 'Voies' of course would have been easily associated with the decadence period which seemed to drown out the rest and prevented the critics from really appreciating his new colour works. The 1904 exhibition did nothing to promote Redon's success. What did emerge as a result of the exhibition, was Redon's move to exploring the possibilities of colour to every extent and making his floral studies more dominating in his painting. The flower

which was a familiar aspect of many symbolist paintings where different flowers represented a different feeling or mood. By 1906 Redon became well known as a flower painter, not only for painting flowers on their own but including them into other subject matter as seen in *The Fallen Angel* 1905. It was almost as if Redon's sadness was leaving him and as a result, his inner spirit being set free. Whether or not the fact that his first child was born had anything to do with this transformation is not known. What is known is that his sadness was replaced with a joyful happiness, Hobbs describes it as a "deliberately naive spirituality and contemplation of nature" (Hobbs, Richard, 1977, PG145)

Although the 1904 exhibition was a failure. By 1906, Redon's success began to grow once again. This had a lot to do with the written reviews he received. Firstly from the poet Francis Jammes and secondly from Marius Athénas and René Merlo used under the pseudonym of Marius Ary Leblond. Both had great praise for Redon as a colourist. Jammes believed Redon's new works were from his subconscious and the artist himself was not truly in control of the images he created.

^{Redon}
He stated that his work was, "applying the abstraction of theory and demonstrations on tangible bodies

which was a familiar aspect of many symbolist paintings where different flowers represented a different feeling or mood. By 1906 Redon became well known as a flower painter, not only for painting flowers on their own but including them into other subject matter as seen in *The Fallen Angel* 1905. It was almost as if Redon's sadness was leaving him and as a result, his inner spirit being set free. Whether or not the fact that his first child was born had anything to do with this transformation is not known. What is known is that his sadness was replaced with a joyful happiness, Hobbs described it as a "deliberately naive spirituality and contemplation of nature" (Hobbs, Richard, 1977, PG145).

Although the 1904 exhibition was a failure. By 1906, Redon's success began to grow once again. This had a lot to do with the written reviews he received. Firstly from the poet Francis James and secondly from Marins Athenas and René Merlo used under the pseudonym of Marins Ary Leblond. Both had great praise for Redon as a colorist. James believed Redon's new works were from his subconscious and the artist himself was not truly in control of the images he created.

He stated that his work was, "applying the abstraction of theory and demonstrations on tangible bodies

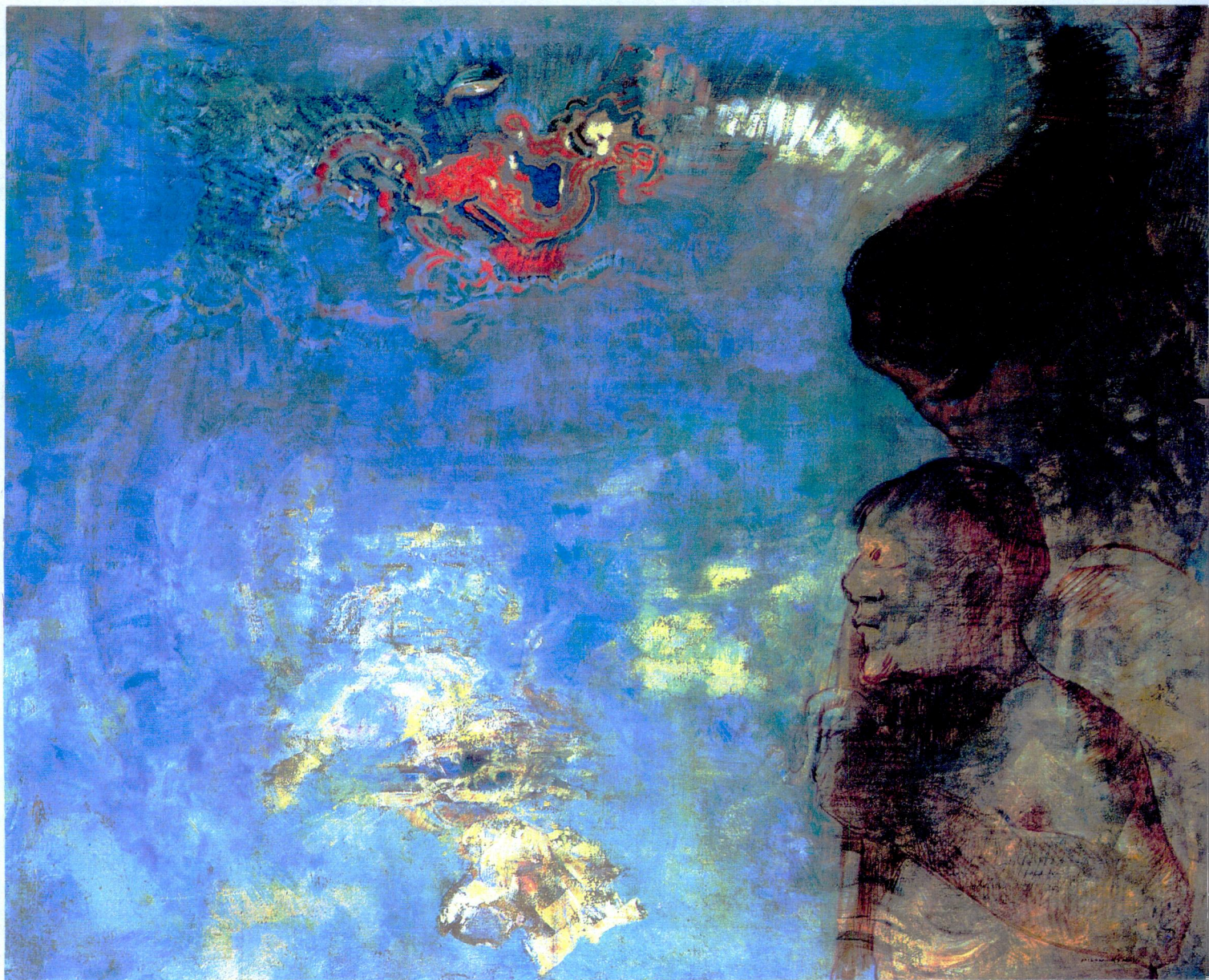


Plate No 7 The fallen Angel, 1905.

, and proposing, problems to be resolved ", bringing together
" the probable with the improbable " to give " a logic to
imaginary elements "(Braziller, G., 1986, PG.17). So in fact
what Jammes says is very much a contradiction to Redon's own
views.

and proposing, problems to be resolved", bringing together
"the probable with the improbable" to give "a logic to
imaginary elements" (Braxillier, G., 1986, PG.17). So in fact
what Jammes says is very much a contradiction to Redon's own
views.

CHAPTER TWO

By the early twentieth century many artists had moved towards abstraction leaving representational art behind. Such artists ,preferred symbolic colour to natural colour, sought to portray ideas rather than direct observation and wanted to convey deeper and more varied levels of meaning. Redon was not alone in the growing concern for the quality of inner life, and spiritual development. Another such artist was Wassily Kandinsky, who was born in 1866. He aspired to be a musician but instead went to study law and economics in Russia. Shortly after going to see an exhibition of the French Impressionists, Kandinsky abandoned his legal career ,and in 1896 went to Munich to study painting . Over a period of twelve years under different apprenticeships, Kandinsky had gone through several stylistic phases. He was deeply interested in philosophy and religion, poetry and music. Unknown to him at the time ,music was to play a major role in his artistic career. He began to experiment with sounds and colours, hoping to find a common spiritual basis for all the arts, by achieving an effect that was both physical and

CHAPTER TWO

By the early twentieth century many artists had moved towards abstraction leaving representational art behind. Such artists preferred symbolic colour to natural colour, sought to portray ideas rather than direct observation and wanted to convey deeper and more varied levels of meaning. Redon was not alone in the growing concern for the quality of inner life, and spiritual development. Another such artist was Wassily Kandinsky, who was born in 1866. He aspired to be a musician but instead went to study law and economics in Russia. Shortly after going to see an exhibition to the French Impressionists, Kandinsky abandoned his legal career, and in 1896 went to Munich to study painting. Over a period of twelve years under different apprenticeships, Kandinsky had gone through several stylistic phases. He was deeply interested in philosophy and religion, poetry and music. Unknown to him at the time, music was to play a major role in his artistic career. He began to experiment with sounds and colours, hoping to find a common spiritual basis for all the arts, by achieving an effect that was both physical and

psychological. Both Kandinsky and Redon , along with other artists of the time such as Paul Gauguin and Serusier believed that Impressionism lacked ideas and it was their role as artists to bring meaning back to modern painting.

Just as Redon used colour to convey the mood and the idea of a subject . Kandinsky believed that colour appropriately used could produce a spiritual vibration. As he wrote;

A painter who longs to express his inner life cannot but envy the ease with which music achieves this end," the artist should "seek to apply the methods of music to his own art," which would result in "the modern desire for rhythm in painting, for mathematical, abstract construction , for repeated notes of colour, setting colour in motion (Cooke. Catherine .1987 . PG.11.).

Just as a bright colour can hurt the eye , in comparison a strong sharp musical note can hurt the ear. Just as music expresses itself by sounds, painting expresses itself by colours. Therefore Kandinsky believed that "colour directly influences the soul"(Chipp, B., H.,1968, PG155)

Kandinsky also aimed at achieving beauty by creating a feeling , in the same way music can make its listener feel

psychological. Both Kandinsky and Redon, along with other artists of the time such as Paul Gauguin and Seurat, believed that Impressionism lacked ideas and it was their role as artists to bring meaning back to modern painting.

Just as Redon used colour to convey the mood and the idea of a subject, Kandinsky believed that colour appropriately used could produce a spiritual vibration. As he wrote;

A painter who longs to express his inner life cannot but envy the ease with which music achieves this end. The artist should "seek to apply the methods of music to his own art," which would result in "the modern desire for rhythm in painting, for mathematical, abstract construction, for repeated notes of colour, setting colour in motion" (Cooke, Catherine, 1987, pg.11.).

Just as a bright colour can hurt the eye, in comparison a second sharp musical note can hurt the ear. Just as music expresses itself by sounds, painting expresses itself by colours. Therefore Kandinsky believed that "colour directly influences the soul" (Chipp, B., H., 1968, pg.155).

Kandinsky also aimed at achieving beauty by creating a feeling, in the same way music can make its listener feel

emotion. Therefore this shows Kandinsky believed that colours would seem to have sounds. He also believed as did Redon that art did not need to be explained or understood. All that is necessary is for it to be felt and then only by those capable of feeling. According to Redon;

all the errors made by critics concerning " his " first works were the result of their inability to see that it was not at all necessary to define, to understand , to limit,...the beautiful form from elsewhere, carries it's meaning within itself (Braziller, G., 1986, PG.86).

Definition is not necessary for ones appreciation of a piece of art , and can in fact limit ones perception of it. Creations are there to inspire not to give explanations. Rather than spoil it's purity Redon allows the following generations to find their own meaning and create their own dreams.

Kandinsky was the first artist, if only by a very short time , to paint a non-objective painting. He took this first step shortly before Mondrian and Delaunay, Malevich and Kupka . These artists arrived at the same solution around the same time , although quite independently of Kandinsky. Even before Kandinsky's work began to experiment with sounds and colour , the French painters of the symbolist decade were

emotion. Therefore this shows Kandinsky believed that colours would seem to have sounds. He also believed as did Redon that art did not need to be explained or understood. All that is necessary is for it to be felt and then only by those capable of feeling. According to Redon;

All the errors made by critics concerning "his" first works were the result of their inability to see that it was not at all necessary to define, to understand, to limit...the beautiful form from elsewhere, carries its meaning within itself (Braziller, G., 1986, pg.86).

Definition is not necessary for ones appreciation of a piece of art, and can in fact limit ones perception of it. Creations are there to inspire not to give explanations. Rather than spoil it's purity Redon allows the following generations to find their own meaning and create their own dreams.

Kandinsky was the first artist, if only by a very short time, to paint a non-objective painting. He took this first step shortly before Mondrian and Delaunay, Malevich and Kupka. These artists arrived at the same solution around the same time, although quite independently of Kandinsky. Even before Kandinsky's work began to experiment with sounds and colour, the French painters of the symbolist decade were

aware of ,and influenced by these ideas put forward by Baudelaire ; " what would be truly surprising would be to find that sound could not suggest colour, that colour could not evoke the idea of a melody " (Tuchman, Maurice, 1986, PG.32). Therefore the entire development of painting leading up to 1910 shows that the breakthrough to the abstract was no doubt inevitable. From the literary influences of the Symbolists and the Impressionists breakdown of light ,leading to the French Fauvist emphasis on colour. Artists were no longer copying nature instead they were looking inward for inspiration. It was this approach that gave a piece of art work its originality and made it effective; to the extent that it aroused emotion. According to Kandinsky it " altered something in the soul"(Chipp, B., Herchel, 1968, PG.155). By giving up the help of surrounding objects and neglecting detailed form, the artist looks inward, influenced by what Kandinsky referred to as spiritual possibilities. In doing so Kandinsky paved the way towards a better understanding of nonobjective art in general. Instead of opposing art and nature, he re-established them on an equal or rather a parallel footing. Kandinsky was no ordinary painter , he brought to breaking point the ties between painting and the real world . By exploring further and far beyond the limits

aware of, and influenced by these ideas put forward by
Baudelaire; "what would be truly surprising would be to
find that sound could not suggest colour, that colour could
not evoke the idea of a melody" (Tuchman, Maurice, 1986,
Pg.32). Therefore the entire development of painting
leading up to 1910 shows that the breakthrough to the
abstract was no doubt inevitable. From the literary
influences of the Symbolists and the Impressionists breakdown
of light, leading to the French Fauvist emphasis on colour.
Artists were no longer copying nature instead they were
looking inward for inspiration. It was this approach that
gave a piece of art work its originality and made it
effective; to the extent that it aroused emotion. According
to Kandinsky it "altered something in the soul"(Chipp, B.,
Herschel, 1968, Pg.125). By giving up the help of surrounding
objects and neglecting detailed form, the artist looks
inward, influenced by what Kandinsky referred to as spiritual
possibilities. In doing so Kandinsky paved the way towards a
better understanding of nonobjective art in general. Instead
of opposing art and nature, he re-established them on an
equal or rather a parallel footing. Kandinsky was no
ordinary painter, he brought to breaking point the ties
between painting and the real world. By exploring further
and far beyond the limits

of tradition, he finally set painting free from it's established pattern. At this point it is tempting to wonder what would have happened to the art world , had he decided to continue in his profession as a lawyer and not taken up painting.

Kandinsky's life as an artist can be grouped into four main periods. The first in Germany, (Munich and Murnau 1896 - 1914) the second in Russia, (Moscow 1914 - 1921) the third in Germany again, (Berlin, Weimar and Dessau 1921 -1933) and the last in Paris 1933 -1944 . The time he spent in Munich is often singled out and written about by art historians, because it was the period leading not only to Kandinsky's own development, but also to the development of abstraction in painting as a whole. During that time, his experiments and philosophical concepts lead him, through gradual exaggeration of the features of the landscape, to a final breakthrough to the abstract . In 1911 The Blue Rider or Der Blaue Reiter was set up by Kandinsky and Franz Marc. It was not as Taschen puts it ;

a new movement in painting in Germany, but rather a call for spiritual renewal in all spheres of art and culture," which was meant to "include the recollection of mankind's spiritual wealth from the past (Taschen, Benedikt, 1992, PG.43).

of tradition, he finally set painting free from its established pattern. At this point it is tempting to wonder what would have happened to the art world, had he decided to continue in his profession as a lawyer and not taken up painting.

Kandinsky's life as an artist can be grouped into four main periods. The first in Germany, (Munich and Murnau 1896 - 1914) the second in Russia, (Moscow 1914 - 1921) the third in Germany again, (Berlin, Weimar and Dessau 1921 - 1933) and the last in Paris 1933 - 1944. The time he spent in Munich is often singled out and written about by art historians, because it was the period leading not only to Kandinsky's own development, but also to the development of abstraction in painting as a whole. During that time, his experiments and philosophical concepts led him, through gradual exaggeration of the features of the landscape, to a final breakthrough to the abstract. In 1911 The Blue Rider or Der Blaue Reiter was set up by Kandinsky and Franz Marc.

It was not as Taschen puts it ;

a new movement in painting in Germany, but rather a call for spiritual renewal in all spheres of art and culture, "which was meant to "include the recollection of mankind's spiritual wealth from the past (Taschen, Benedikt, 1992, pg.43).

The first two exhibitions in 1911 and 1912 at the Thannhanser and Goltz Gallerie's in Munich created considerable interest. A year later The Blaue Reiter Alamanac was published expressing the ideas of both Kandinsky and Marc, that the spiritual was at the root of all the arts and within every individual. It was also consistent with the ideas put forward in Kandinsky's Concerning The Spiritual In Art , 1912.

In Munich Kandinsky wrote and published two of his three books. Concerning The Spiritual In Art. Which according to Lipsey the book's ;

essential achievement was to identify the new art as a legitimate language of the spirit and to lay groundwork for a way of thinking, particularly about abstract art , that made sense (Lipsey, Roger, 1988, PG.44).

This was followed by Reminiscences . They were published one after the other in 1912 and 1913. In 1913 Kandinsky published Klänge or Sounds which bears much resemblance to Redon's earlier lithographs which were also accompanied by poems. Kandinsky's Klänge was a collection of thirty eight poems accompanied by fifty five woodcuts in black , white and colour . However original the style of Kandinsky's

The first two exhibitions in 1911 and 1912 at the Thannhauser and Goltz Galleries in Munich created considerable interest. A year later The Glass Reiter Almanac was published expressing the ideas of both Kandinsky and Marc, that the spiritual was at the root of all the arts and within every individual. It was also consistent with the ideas put forward in Kandinsky's Concerning The Spiritual in Art, 1912.

In Munich Kandinsky wrote and published two of his three books. Concerning The Spiritual in Art. Which according to Lipsey the book's;

essential achievement was to identify the new art as a legitimate language of the spirit and to lay down a way of thinking, particularly about abstract art, that made sense (Lipsey, Roger, 1988, pg.44).

This was followed by Reminiscences. They were published one after the other in 1912 and 1913. In 1913 Kandinsky published Klänge or Sounds which bears much resemblance to Redon's earlier lithographs which were also accompanied by poems. Kandinsky's Klänge was a collection of thirty eight poems accompanied by fifty five woodcuts in black, white and colour. However original the style of Kandinsky's

earlier work such as 'The Singer '(1903), when compared with his works five or six years later, the difference is astounding. The same artist produced, using watercolours the first abstract painting in the whole history of art.

Kandinsky expressed interest in the work of the Symbolists and the Neo - Impressionists, the French Fauves and the Expressionists. From a strictly stylist point of view , the Fauvist phase cannot be ignored in connection with kandinsky's Munich and Murnau work. It seems he was lead to elimination of the object by way of the Neo - Impressionist splitting up of colour, and the way the Fauves treated structure. His paintings of country towns and mountains, was where everything began. The paintings were expressive and simplified, with an unusual richness of colour, filled with atmosphere. It was this element of simplicity that set them apart from the drama of the Expressionists as well as the Fauves. The paintings had a recurring colour scheme, ranging from very bright yellows contrasting with deep spiritual blues. The Symbolists at the same time were using a similar range of colours, with the same tendency to pay more attention to the expression of inner feeling ,rather than to an accurate description of the landscape.

earlier work such as 'The Singer' (1903), when compared with his works five or six years later, the difference is astounding. The same artist produced, using watercolours the first abstract painting in the whole history of art.

Kandinsky expressed interest in the work of the Symbolists and the Neo- Impressionists, the French Fauves and the Expressionists. From a strictly stylist point of view, the Fauvist phase cannot be ignored in connection with Kandinsky's Munich and Manner work. It seems he was lead to elimination of the object by way of the Neo- Impressionist splitting up of colour, and the way the Fauves treated structure. His paintings of country towns and mountains, was where everything began. The paintings were expressive and simplified, with an unusual richness of colour, filled with atmosphere. It was this element of simplicity that set them apart from the drama of the Expressionists as well as the Fauves. The paintings had a recurring colour scheme, ranging from very bright yellows contrasting with deep spiritual blues. The Symbolists at the same time were using a similar range of colours, with the same tendency to pay more attention to the expression of inner feeling, rather than to an accurate description of the landscape.



Plate No 8 The Singer, 1903.



Plate No 9 First abstract watercolour, 1910.

For the next four to five years Kandinsky went on painting from nature, the subjects in his painting are still recognizable although the style he uses is increasingly free. In 'The Cow ' (1911) for example, the animal is almost blended into the landscape by means of deliberate blurring effects. The outline of the cow is made unclear by the white and yellow of the surrounding area; a white mountain which seems to extend the bare outline of the cow's body.

From 1910 to 1914 Kandinsky painted his Impressions, a total of six all in 1911 ,Improvisations, quite a long series comprising of thirty five works , and Compositions, painted between 1910 and 1914. As Frank Jewett Mather explains, in his writing for The Nation in 1914, where he defines Kandinsky's three stages in art;

Impressions, which is a way of representing the outer reality. Improvisations . . an unnurtured summary of the expression of the inner need, and finally Compositions ..a matured expression of the inner need (Levin, G., and Lorenz, M., 1992, PG.17).

Impressions and Improvisations were often given subtitles, such as Impression 3. (Concert), or Impression 12.(Riders). These titles are significant because at the time the

For the next four to five years Kandinsky went on painting from nature, the subjects in his painting are still recognizable although the style he uses is increasingly free. In 'The Cow' (1911) for example, the animal is almost blended into the landscape by means of deliberate blurring effects. The outline of the cow is made unclear by the white and yellow of the surrounding area; a white mountain which seems to extend the bare outline of the cow's body.

From 1910 to 1914 Kandinsky painted his Impressions, a total of six all in 1911, Improvisations, quite a long series comprising of thirty five works, and Compositions, painted between 1910 and 1914. As Frank Jewett Mather explains, in his writing for The Nation in 1914, where he defines Kandinsky's three stages in art;

Impressions, which is a way of representing the outer reality. Improvisations . . . an unarranged summary of the expression of the inner need, and finally Compositions . . . a matured expression of the inner need (Levin, G., and Lorenz, M., 1992, pg.17).

Impressions and Improvisations were often given subtitles, such as Impression 3 (Concert), or Impression 12 (Riders). These titles are significant because at the time the

painter was reaching for abstraction, leaving behind the recognizable elements of the everyday world, these subtitles show that he was reluctant to abandon entirely familiar landmarks. Kandinsky considered that pure abstraction was not yet possible for the artist.

Kandinsky was so accustomed to the landscape he painted , he was able to use this familiarity to explore as far as possible the very form of the landscape. The constant thematic repetition in his work, shows that in so doing began to care very little for the actual logic of the finished painting. Similarly a number of religious and biblical themes recur in his landscapes. During 1911, Kandinsky constantly returned to the same themes, *Saint George* , of 1911 is painted on glass. Influenced by Russian folk art, with its bright colours , and slanting figures. His colour scheme was influenced by the Symbolists, with a background made up of a deep spiritual blue, and a dark red. According to Armin Zweite, by acquiring;

a religious connection " Kandinsky " evokes a sense of the quest for a new art and a new spiritual awakening " (Zweite, Armin, 1971).

All Saints ,1911 was also painted on glass and contained a

painter was reaching for abstraction, leaving behind the recognizable elements of the everyday world, these ambities show that he was reluctant to abandon entirely familiar landmarks. Kandinsky considered that pure abstraction was not yet possible for the artist.

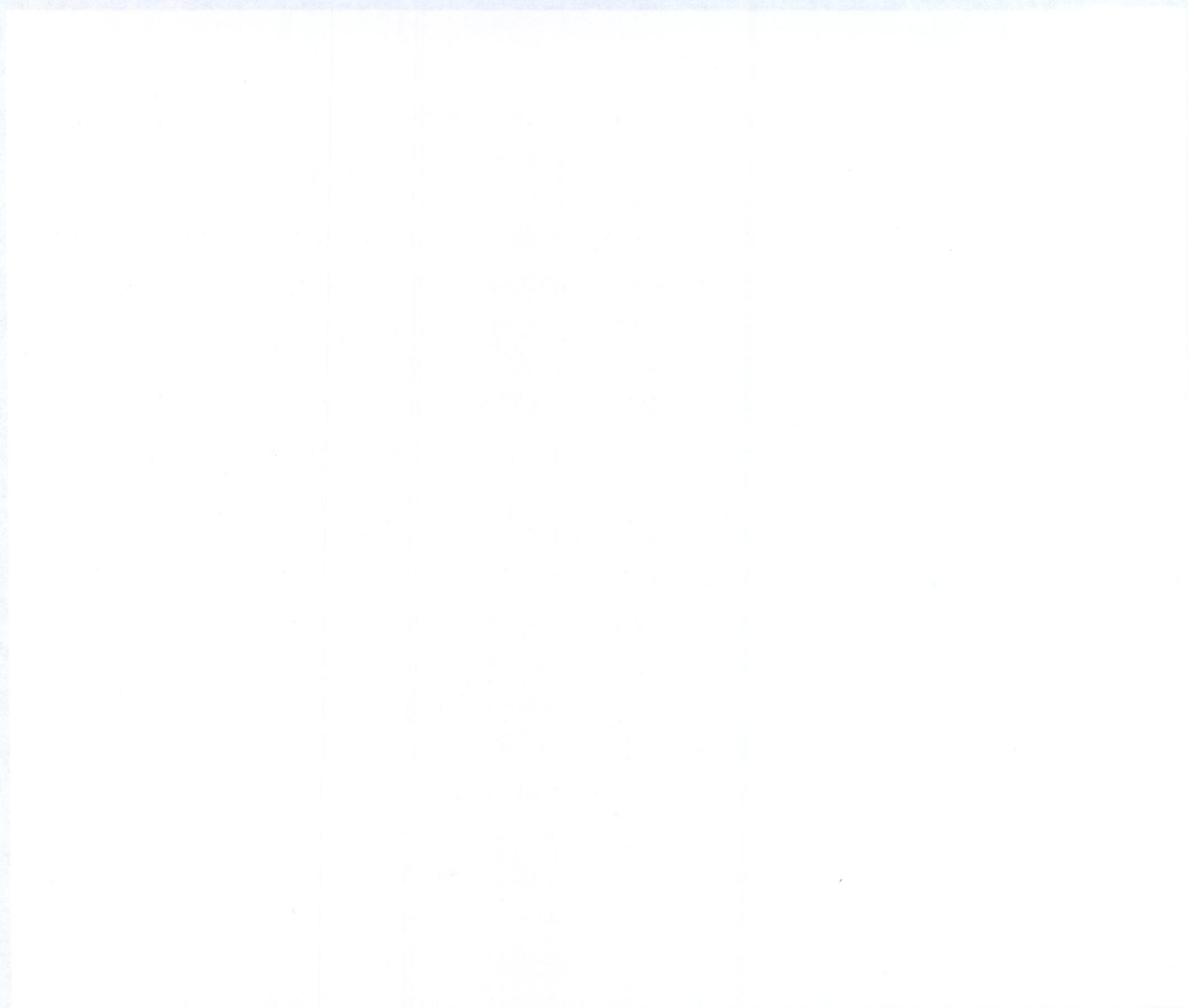
Kandinsky was so accustomed to the landscape he painted, he was able to use this familiarity to explore as far as possible the very form of the landscape. The constant thematic repetition in his work, shows that in so doing began to care very little for the actual logic of the finished painting. Similarly a number of religious and biblical themes recur in his landscapes. During 1911, Kandinsky constantly returned to the same themes, Saint George, St. 1911 is painted on glass. Influenced by Russian folk art, with its bright colours, and slanting figures. His colour scheme was influenced by the Symbolists, with a background made up of a deep spiritual blue, and a dark red. According to Armin Zweite, by accident;

a religious connection "Kandinsky" evokes a sense of the quest for a new art and a new spiritual awakening" (Zweite, Armin, 1971).

All Saints, 1911 was also painted on glass and contained a



Plate No 10 All Saints, 1911.



range of distinctive religious features, again these were influenced by Russian folk art. Other of his works at this time show his continuing interest in religious themes . Such as *Archangels* , *The Resurrection*, *The Deluge And The Last Judgement*. It would be difficult, however unless guided by the title, to distinguish between *Delude* and *The Last Judgement* and *Abstraction Red Corner* (1914). There is a distinctive progression in his paintings which culminates in the complete elimination of the object . A salient experience for Kandinsky's move towards nonobjective art was *Haystacks* by Monet, which he saw at an exhibition of French Impressions in Moscow in 1895. At first he was confused. It was not until he had looked up the title that he realized what it was, haystacks. He was then over - come with the use of colours.

Historians have claimed that kandinsky was influenced by Wilhelm Worringer's essay Abstraktion und Einfühlung (Abstraction and Empathy) (1907). This discusses the principle of realist and abstract art in every age . According to Mark A. Cheetham there is no evidence to show that Kandinsky had even read Worringer's essay (Cheetham, Mark, A.,1991). In Concerning The Spiritual In Art 1912 ,

range of distinctive religious features, again these were influenced by Russian folk art. Other of his works at this time show his continuing interest in religious themes, such as *Archangels*, *The Resurrection*, *The Deluge* and *The Last Judgement*. It would be difficult, however, unless guided by the title, to distinguish between *Deluge* and *The Last Judgement* and *Abstraction Red Corner* (1914). There is a distinctive progression in his paintings which culminates in the complete elimination of the object. A salient experience for Kandinsky's move towards nonobjective art was Haystack by Monet, which he saw at an exhibition of French Impressionists in Moscow in 1895. At first he was confused. It was not until he had looked up the title that he realized what it was, Haystack. He was then over - come with the use of colours.

Historians have claimed that Kandinsky was influenced by Wilhelm Worringer's essay *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* (*Abstraction and Empathy*) (1907). This discusses the principle of realist and abstract art in every age. According to Mark A. Cheetham there is no evidence to show that Kandinsky had even read Worringer's essay (Cheetham, Mark, A.1991). In *Concerning The Spiritual in Art* 1912,

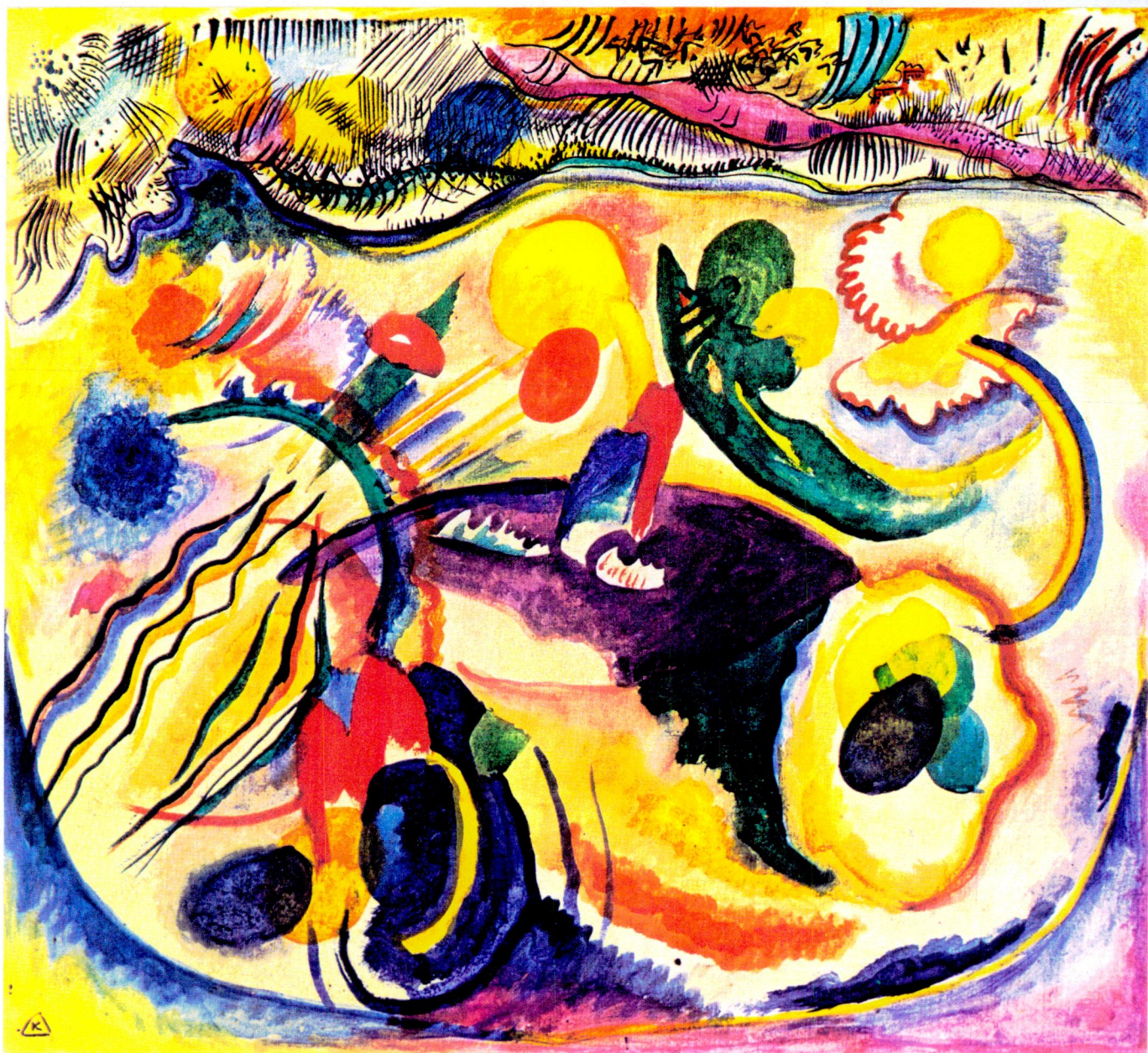


Plate No 11 Deluge and the last judgement, 1913.





Plate No 12 Abstraction red corner, 1914.

Kandinsky develops on his philosophical and aesthetic theories. He analyses the spiritual foundations of art and talks about the language of form and colour. He refers to Mussorgsky and Schonberg, Hinduism to Theosophy, Neo - Impressionism, Pre - Raphaelitism, Bochlín and Cézanne. He describes Matisse as a colourist, for whom the object is nothing but a starting point and he focuses on Picasso who concentrated on form and who achieved a gradual breakdown of the object. Kandinsky goes on to make an analysis of the elements of painting, which he writes about again in his Point and Line To Plane . He explores the spiritual, the emotional and almost all the possible implications of form and colour. This was inspired by Scriabin's parallel between sounds and colour.

In his examination of the nature of colour , Kandinsky dwells on the psychological working of colour which he proclaims to be the key to the inner vibration. As he himself writes ;

colour is the keyboard , the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings,"and "form can be used either for the task of limiting objects, or it can remain purely abstract. Moreover all form is the outward expression of an inner meaning (Cooke, Catherine, 1987, PG.37).

Kandinsky develops on his philosophical and aesthetic theories. He analyses the spiritual foundations of art and talks about the language of form and colour. He refers to Masaccio and Schongauer, Hinduism to Theosophy, Neo-Expressionism, Pre-Raphaelitism, Boehlin and Cezanne. He describes Matisse as a colourist, for whom the object is nothing but a starting point and he focuses on Picasso who concentrated on form and who achieved a gradual breakdown of the object. Kandinsky goes on to make an analysis of the elements of painting, which he writes about again in his Point and Line to Plane. He explores the spiritual, the emotional and almost all the possible implications of form and colour. This was inspired by Scriabin's parallel between sounds and colour.

In his examination of the nature of colour, Kandinsky dwells on the psychological working of colour which he proclaims to be the key to the inner vibration. As he himself writes;

colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings, and "form can be used either for the task of limiting objects, or it can remain purely abstract. Moreover all form is the outward expression of an inner meaning" (Cooke, Catherine, 1987, pg.37).

In Concerning The Spiritual In Art Kandinsky is still a little wary of the legitimacy of pure abstraction. He quite clearly has not taken the final step to pure abstraction. In On The Question Of Form he goes much further;

the forms for embodiment which are extracted from the storeroom of matter by the spirit , can easily be arranged between two poles; (1) the great abstraction, (2) the great realism, these two poles open two roads which lead finally to one goal (Roethel, K, Hans, 1971,PG.69).

It is in this text that one can see the similarities between Kandinsky and Worringer, as he stresses the different harmonies between realism and abstraction.

In an interview of 1921 just before he left Russia for good, Kandinsky stated that it was he who was the first to break with the tradition of painting existing objects and completed abstract painting in 1911. Now , it could be argued, that it matters very little whether it was to his credit or that of another. What should be mentioned is that by 1921, ten years later, there were many other possible candidates who could have claimed the same. Certain non - figurative paintings were completed by Kupka in 1911. Mondrian, Malevich and Delaunay all eliminated the object in 1912 .

In Concerning The Spiritual in Art Kandinsky is still a little wary of the legitimacy of pure abstraction. He quite clearly has not taken the final step to pure abstraction. In On The Question Of Form he goes much further;

the forms for embodiment which are extracted from the storeroom of matter by the spirit, can easily be arranged between two poles; (1) the great abstraction, (2) the great realism, these two poles open two roads which lead finally to one goal (Rothel, K, Hans, 1971, p. 69).

It is in this text that one can see the similarities between Kandinsky and Woringer, as he stresses the different harmonies between realism and abstraction.

In an interview of 1921 just before he left Russia for good, Kandinsky stated that it was he who was the first to break with the tradition of painting existing objects and completed abstract painting in 1911. Now, it could be argued, that it matters very little whether it was to his credit or that of another. What should be mentioned is that by 1921, ten years later, there were many other possible candidates who could have claimed the same. Certain non-figurative paintings were completed by Kupka in 1911, Mondrian, Malevich and Delaunay all eliminated the object in 1912.

Perhaps it would be more helpful to see the development of abstraction as a joint effort in response to the changing world.

Another factor contributing to Kandinsky's move to abstract art is the breakdown in scale between the different elements of his landscape. By 1910 Kandinsky was showing semi-figurative works. His first lyrical Improvisations and Compositions show form on the verge of freeing itself from subject matter. The same year Malevich did a series of still lifes in the style of Cézanne. Two years later Kandinsky's Improvisations, subtitled *Horses, With Yellow Horse, and Rowing*, shows that he was taking the first steps toward a new future in art. He was still using objects / figures as a basis for his work but, without the aid of the subtitle it would be difficult to recognize these individual elements. In Improvisations 26 (Rowing), Kandinsky creates a "harmonious unity between, line, form, and colour" (Zweite, Armin, 1971). Kandinsky succeeds in creating a dreamlike image using a simple vague outline for the boat, and the same colour for the background mountain, with very little detail.

Perhaps it would be more helpful to see the development of abstraction as a joint effort in response to the changing world.

Another factor contributing to Kandinsky's move to abstract art is the breakdown in scale between the different elements of his landscape. By 1910 Kandinsky was showing semi-figurative works. His first lyrical improvisations and compositions show form on the verge of fleeing itself from subject matter. The same year Malevich did a series of still lifes in the style of Cezanne. Two years later Kandinsky's improvisations, subtitled "Horses, With Yellow Horses, and Rowing," shows that he was taking the first steps toward a new future in art. He was still using objects / figures as a basis for his work but, without the aid of the subtitle it would be difficult to recognize these individual elements. In improvisations 26 (Rowing), Kandinsky creates a harmonious unity between line, form, and colour (Zweite, Armin, 1911). Kandinsky succeeds in creating a dreamlike image using a simple vague outline for the boat, and the same colour for the background mountain, with very little detail.



Plate No 13. Improvisations, No.26 (Rowing), 1913.

The object is not blatantly identifiable therefore the viewer is not distracted from the feeling the work communicates. Therefore the image is successful because it conveys emotion.

In 1913 an exhibition called the International Exhibition Of Modern Art was organized by the Association of American Painters And Sculptors, which included Walt Kuhn, and Arthur Davis. The exhibition became known as the Armory Show. It presented sixteen hundred pieces of work, paintings , drawings, and prints. The exhibition travelled from New York to Chicago and Boston. While it was in New York it was held in Alfred Stieglitz's 291 Gallery. This gallery was devoted to showing the works of avant - garde artists, both European and American. The American works largely dominated the show but as Haftmann suggests "it was the Europeans who gave the exhibition it's character (Haftmann, Werner, 1965, PG161.). Stieglitz at this time was fully aware of Kandinsky's writings and extremely interested in his theories . He translated from German extracts of Kandinsky's Concerning The Spiritual In Art, because of this interest. Kandinsky showed only one painting at the Armory show compared to Redon exhibiting forty works. There were other Symbolists represented, Puvis De Chavannes and Maurice Denis.

The object is not instantly identifiable therefore the viewer is not distracted from the feeling the work communicates. Therefore the image is successful because it conveys emotion.

In 1913 an exhibition called the International Exhibition of Modern Art was organized by the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, which included Walt Kuhn, and Arthur Davis. The exhibition became known as the Armory Show. It presented sixteen hundred pieces of work, paintings, drawings, and prints. The exhibition travelled from New York to Chicago and Boston. While it was in New York it was held in Alfred Steiglitz's 291 Gallery. This gallery was devoted to showing the works of avant-garde artists, both European and American. The American works largely dominated the show but as Haftmann suggests "it was the Europeans who gave the exhibition its character" (Haftmann, Werner, 1985, p. 111). Steiglitz at this time was fully aware of Kandinsky's writings and extremely interested in his theories. He translated from German extracts of Kandinsky's Concerning the Spiritual in Art, because of this interest. Kandinsky showed only one painting at the Armory show compared to Redon exhibiting forty works. There were other Symbolists represented, Paul Gauguin and Maurice Denis.

Edward Munch was represented by five lithographs. The post - Impressionists were represented by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Rousseau. Picasso was there for the Cubists. The Fauves were represented by Matisse. There was also work by Delaunay, Duchamp and Picabias. The show received mixed critical reviews.

Redon succeeded in selling twenty nine of his forty works represented. Kandinsky sold his painting to Stieglitz, who wanted to make sure that one of Kandinsky's work's would remain in America. This would enable younger artists to view it. So that in time it would be realized how great an influence Kandinsky had on the abstract art movement in America. Israel White, a young reporter for the Newark Evening News recorded Stieglitz as saying that;

Kandinsky was possibly the most important feature of the whole show "when" considering the future development of a certain phase of painting (Lenvin, G. and. Lorenz, M. 1992 ,PG.12).

Kadinsky went far beyond the lines of tradition. Through his use of form and anti - naturalistic colour, and reaching for an abstract style Kandinsky was almost demanding a response to his work. An effective reaction from the viewer, to his expression of inner feeling through the power of form and colour.

Edward Munch was represented by five lithographs. The post-
Impressionists were represented by Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin
and Roussseau. Picasso was there for the Cubists. The Fauves
were represented by Matisse. There was also work by Delaunay,
Duchamp and Picabia. The show received mixed critical
reviews.

Regon succeeded in selling twenty nine of his forty works
represented. Kandinsky sold his painting to Stieglitz, who
wanted to make sure that one of Kandinsky's work's would
remain in America. This would enable younger artists to view
it. So that in time it would be realized how great an
influence Kandinsky had on the abstract art movement in
America. Israel White, a young reporter for the Newark
Evening News recorded Stieglitz as saying that;

Kandinsky was possibly the most important feature of
the whole "when" considering the future development of
a certain phase of painting "(Benjamin, G. and Lorenz,
M. 1932, pg.12).

Kandinsky went far beyond the lines of tradition. Through his
use of form and anti-naturalistic colour, and reaching for
an abstract style Kandinsky was almost demanding a response
to his work. An effective reaction from the viewer, to his
expression of inner feeling through the power of form and
colour.

Just as Redon introduced colour to evoke a mood and a feeling of emotion. An article in the New York Times , 1914 , discussed Kandinsky by saying ;

He places his stress on spiritual expression, on the communication of the artist's inner feeling. The outer form must grow in art as in religion out of the inner spiritual necessity. A man must paint his most subtle emotion as a musician plays them, or a poet speaks them. He must use his knowledge of construction to compose patterns and colour schemes that shall give pleasure because of there harmony "(Levin, G. Lorenz, M. 1992. PG. 15 -16.).

The difference between Kandinsky and Redon is Kandinsky from the beginning used a scientific process to create colour harmonies which can only be described as spiritual. Human nature being what it is grasps for understanding and in setting out scientific explanations for the spiritual, Kandinsky made his works more accessible to the general public. Banishing the aura of mystery and elitism that surrounds the art object and in particular , abstract art .

¹ Charles Baudelaire died in 1867, twenty years before the Symbolist movement was identified.

Just as Rodon introduced colour to evoke a mood and a feeling of emotion. An article in the New York Times, 1914, discussed Kandinsky by saying;

He places his stress on spiritual expression, on the communication of the artist's inner feeling. The outer form must grow in art as in religion out of the inner spiritual necessity. A man must paint his most subtle emotion as a musician plays them, or a poet speaks them. He must use his knowledge of construction to compose patterns and colour schemes that shall give pleasure because of their harmony" (Levin, G. Lorenz, M. 1992, Pg. 15-16.).

The difference between Kandinsky and Rodon is Kandinsky from the beginning used a scientific process to create colour harmonies which can only be described as spiritual. Human nature being what it is craves for understanding and in setting out scientific explanations for the spiritual, Kandinsky made his works more accessible to the general public. Banishing the aura of mystery and elitism that surrounds the art object and in particular, abstract art.

* Charles Baudelaire died in 1867, twenty years before the Symbolist movement was identified.

CONCLUSION

The Symbolist movement affected most of the progressive tendencies at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Redon was a central figure in this movement . During the 1880's while the Symbolist artists were pursuing the ideal of the dream , Sigmund Freud was developing his theories on the significance of dreams, and the unconscious. Redon was a painter of dreams and through his mastering of the lithographic medium , and studying anatomy and microbiology, Redon created a world of dreams and nightmares. When Redon began to work in colour , he changed the character of his art from the macabre and somber to the joyous . Using intense colour to dominate the image Redon creates an over - powering sensuality.

During the period up to 1910, Kandinsky's ideas about abstract painting were germinating. In Concerning The Spiritual In Art, published 1912, Kandinsky formulated his ideas on the problems of the relations between art and music. He was convinced that art had to be concerned with the spiritual . Kandinsky's drive for the inner creative, spiritual force enabled him to arrive at abstract art , an art entirely without subject matter except in so far as colours and lines made up a subject.

CONCLUSION

The Symbolist movement affected most of the progressive tendencies at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Redon was a central figure in this movement. During the 1880's while the Symbolist artists were pursuing the ideal of the dream, Sigmund Freud was developing his theories on the significance of dreams, and the unconscious. Redon was a painter of dreams and through his mastering of the lithographic medium, and studying anatomy and microbiology, Redon created a world of dreams and nightmares. When Redon began to work in colour, he changed the character of his art from the macabre and somber to the joyous. Using intense colour to dominate the image Redon creates an over - powering sensuality.

During the period up to 1910, Kandinsky's ideas about abstract painting were germinating. In Concerning The Spiritual in Art, published 1912, Kandinsky formulated his ideas on the problems of the relations between art and music. He was convinced that art had to be concerned with the spiritual. Kandinsky's drive for the inner creative, spiritual force enabled him to arrive at abstract art, an art entirely without subject matter except in so far as colours and lines made up a subject.

As Kandinsky confirmed:

At some predestined hour the time is ripe for decisions. That is to say, that the creative spirit (which one may call the abstract spirit) finds access first to a single soul, and later on to many, and sets up a yearning therein, an inner urge. (Roethal, H.,1971, P,63,).

Kandinsky's development as a painter can be seen to have gone in two opposite directions. During the first stage, through his exploration of line, form and colour he made the concrete abstract . In the second stage, by explaining abstract art through his writings, he made the abstract concrete . Therefore Kandinsky established the abstract on a firm basis by exploration, all the time influenced by the spiritual.

12. Technical Report

The report is divided into four main sections. The first section is an introduction to the project. The second section is a description of the methodology used. The third section is a discussion of the results. The fourth section is a conclusion.

The first section, the introduction, provides a brief overview of the project. It discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. The second section, the methodology, describes the methods used to collect and analyze the data. The third section, the results, presents the findings of the study. The fourth section, the conclusion, summarizes the main points of the report and provides recommendations for future research.

Endnotes

1. Charles Baudelaire died in 1867, twenty years before the symbolist movement was identified.

2. W. Kandinsky did similar in his use of the animal in "The Cow", 1911.

Index

Charles F. Johnson, died in 1957, formerly, head of the
the National Negro College Fund, was identified
as a member of the group in the early 1950s.
The group was active in the early 1950s.

Bibliography

Braziller, George, Odilon Redon: To myself, notes on life, art and artists. George Braziller Inc., U.S.A, 1986.

Chipp, Herschel, Theories of Modern Art, University Of California Press, 1968.

Cheetham, Mark, The Rhetoric Of Purity: Essentialist theory and the advent of abstract painting, Cambridge, University Press, 1991.

Cooke, Catherine, "Kandinsky: Establishing the spiritual", in Art & Design, Abstract art & the rediscovery of the spiritual, The academy group ltd, London, 1987.

Frascina, F., & Harrison (Eds.), Modern Art and Modernism, Open University series pack (block xiii units 27 -28)., London, Harper & Row, 1983.

Hobbs, Richard, Odilon Redon, Cassel & Collier Macmillan pub. ltd., london, 1977.

Jullian, Philippe, The Symbolists, Phaidon Press ltd, 1973.

Lamplight Collection of Modern Art, Redon, Seurat, and the Symbolists, Lamplight pub. Inc., New York, 1975.

Levin, G., & Lorenz. M., Kandinsky & the American avant - garde 1912 - 1950, Dayton Art Institute, 1992.

Lipsey, Roger, An art of our own : Spiritual in twentieth century art, Boston, Shambhale, 1988.

Roethel, Hans, The Blue Rider, Praeger pub., New York, Washinton, London, 1971.

Tuchman, Maurice, The Spiritual In Art: Abstract painting 1890 - 1985, Abbeville Press, pub., New York, 1986.

Zweite, Armin, The Blue Rider in the lenbachhaus Munich, Praeger pub., Inc, New York, 1971.

Gowing, Lawrence, Odilon Redon: The Phillips Collection, Washinton, 1988.

Bibliography

- Braziller, George, Odilon Redon: To myself, notes on life, art and artists, George Braziller Inc., U.S.A., 1986.
- Chipp, Herschel, Theories of Modern Art, University of California Press, 1968.
- Chestham, Mark, The Rhetoric of Poetry: Essentialist theory and the advent of abstract painting, Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Cooke, Catherine, "Kandinsky: Establishing the spiritual", in Art & Design, Abstract art & the rediscovery of the spiritual, The academy group Ltd, London, 1987.
- Fraschina, P., & Harrison (Eds.), Modern Art and Modernism, Open University series pack (black xiii units 27-28), London, Harper & Row, 1985.
- Hobbs, Richard, Odilon Redon, Cassel & Collier Macmillan pap. Ltd., London, 1977.
- Julian, Philippe, The Symbolists, Phaidon Press Ltd, 1977.
- Lamplight Collection of Modern Art, Redon, Seurat, and the Symbolists, Lamplight pub. Inc., New York, 1975.
- Levin, G., & Lorenz, M., Kandinsky & the American avant-garde 1912 - 1950, Dayton Art Institute, 1992.
- Lipsey, Roger, An art of our own: Spiritual in twentieth century art, Boston, Shambhale, 1988.
- Roethel, Hans, The Blue Rider, Praeger pub., New York, Washington, London, 1971.
- Tuchman, Maurice, The Spiritual in Art: Abstract painting 1890 - 1985, Abbeville Press, pub., New York, 1986.
- Zweite, Armin, The Blue Rider in the Lenbachhaus Munich, Praeger pub., Inc, New York, 1971.
- Gowind, Lawrence, Odilon Redon: The Phillips Collection, Washington, 1988.

Further Reading

Anfam, David, Abstract Expressionism, Thames & Hudson ltd, London, 1990.

Gerhardus, D & M., Symbolism & Art Nouveau, Phaidon Press ltd., London, 1979.

Frascina, F., Blake, N., Briony, F., Garb, T., Harrison, C., Modernity and Modernism: French painting in the nineteenth century, Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 1993.

Frascina, F., Harris, J., Art in modern culture, Open University, Phaidon Press ltd, 1992.

Frascina, F., Harrison, C., Perry, G., Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction. The early twentieth century, Open University, Yale University Press, 1993.

Frascina, F., & Harrison (Eds.), Modern Art and Modernism, London, Harper & Row, 1982.

Moszynska, Anna, Abstract Art, Thames and Hudson ltd, London, 1990.

Roskill, Mark, Klee, Kandinsky and the thought of their time, University of Illinois Press, U.S.A., 1992.

Haftmann, Werner, Painting in the twentieth century, Praeger pub., U.S.A., 1965.

Further Reading

- Ansam, David, Abstract Expressionism, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London, 1970.
- Gerhardus, D & M., Symbolism & Art Nouveau, Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 1979.
- Frascina, F., Blake, N., Briony, F., Gail, T., Harrison, C., Modernism and Modernism: French painting in the nineteenth century, Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 1993.
- Frascina, F., Harris, J., Art in modern culture, Open University, Phaidon Press Ltd, 1992.
- Frascina, F., Harrison, C., Perry, G., Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction. The early twentieth century, Open University, Yale University Press, 1993.
- Frascina, F., & Harrison (Eds.), Modern Art and Modernism, London, Harper & Row, 1982.
- Mossynska, Anna, Abstract Art, Thames and Hudson Ltd, London, 1990.
- Roskili, Mark, Klee, Kandinsky and the thought of their time, University of Illinois Press, U.S.A., 1992.
- Hartmann, Werner, Painting in the twentieth century, Praeger pub., U.S.A., 1965.