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| Malevich, Kazimir Severinovich |
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| Having begun to study with the Russian Impressionist Fedor F. Rerberg in 1906 Moscow, Kazimir Malevich learned colour theory and the craft of Impressionist painting. In 1910 Malevich was painting in a bright Fauve style, and by 1912 he had mastered the structures of Parisian Cubism and elements of the Futurist movement, combining these styles in pieces such as *Knifegrinder* (1912). Malevich referred to the amalgamation of these two styles as ‘Cubo-Futurism.’ Between 1913 and 1915 Malevich created highly accomplished Cubist paintings, and his early 1915 canvases were increasingly dominated by planes of pure colours floating over the Cubist contrast of objects. By the summer of 1915 Malevich was solely painting planes of colours in light on his canvases, a style he called ‘Suprematism,’ by which he meant the ‘domination’ of colour within light. He explored colour in light in his paintings of 1916 to 1918 in several manners, including using spinning discs and then using projectors to cast rays of light onto a white screen of pure light. This was followed by the discovery that spinning discs produce centrifugal forces, calling his paintings, “Supr[ematist] Construction of Colour” where “construction” refers to “force”. In 1918-1919 Malevich painted light itself in his White on White canvases, to conclude with his “Suprematism of the Spirit”, 1919-1920, a Suprematism of the Mind and of cosmic space. Out of the modern trends, Malevich created a painting of pure colour and light, pure non-objectivity and itself a leading modernist trend.  As a painter, Malevich contributed to the major avant-garde exhibitions in Moscow and Petrograd between 1912 and 1920, exhibitions that documented his extraordinary variety and mastery of Cubism, Futurism, and the innovations of Suprematism. With the 1917 October Revolution, the arts institutions were reorganised and Malevich, like many of his colleagues, introduced new methods of teaching in art schools which were based on the modern artistic trends of Cubism, Futurism, Suprematism and Constructivism. At the Practical Art Institute in Vitebsk, 1919-1922, Malevich developed the principles of these trends in the students, creating a modern consciousness manifested by the modern trends – multiple points of view in Cubism, dynamism in Futurism, static and dynamic non-objectivity and the cosmos in Suprematism. Out of this Malevich developed a theory of creativity, of artistic invention, which he continued to explore when in Petrograd/Leningrad, 1923-1926. During these years he also applied the new principles of pure plane and volume to the design of architecture, the *Arkhitektons*, and to graphic design and porcelain. In the late 1920s Malevich began to apply Suprematist principles to a figurative art of peasants and workers in an attempt to align his painting with what would be declared by Stalin’s 1932 decree that art is an instrument of propaganda. Despite this, Malevich was arrested in 1930 on charges of being a “formalist”, by which was meant influenced by Western, bourgeois styles of Cubism and Futurism. His late paintings depict severely stylised but realistic portraits.  Image: Suprematism.png  Figure *Suprematism – Pictorial Masses in Movement*, 1915. Oil on canvas, 101.5 x 62 cm. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam |
| Further reading:  K. S. Malevich, *Essays on Art*, Vols 1 and 2, ed. by Troels Andersen, London: Rapp &  Whiting, 1969; Unpublished Writings 1913-1933, Vols 3 and 4, Copenhagen:  Borgen Verlag, 1978.  Larissa A. Zhadova, *Malevich – Suprematism and Revolution in Russian Art 1910-1930*,  translated from the Russian by Alexander Lieven, London: Thames and Hudson,  1978.  *Kazimir Malevich* 1878-1935, Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1988.  *Malevich Artist and Theoretician*, ed. by Evgeniya Petrova, Paris: Flammarion, 1990.  *Kazimir Malevich in State Russian Museum*, St. Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2000.  Matthew Drutt (ed.), *Suprematism*, Berlin: Guggenheim Museum, 2003.  Andréi Nakov, *Malevich: Painting the Absolute*, 4 vols., Farnham [u.a.]: Lund Humphries, 2010.  Patricia Railing, *Malevich Paints – The Seeing Eye*, Forest Row: Artists Bookworks, 2013.  P. Railing and C. Wallis, “Light Painting” in *Journal of InCoRM*, Vol. 2, Autumn, 2011, pp. 34-46. Online at[www.incorm.org/journal](https://mail.uvic.ca/owa/redir.aspx?C=COKyAhSHH0iHPQwcMVn-53oJ3O04StEIeVneMTq3NbbftHUDzkykqgTO_d6BzaayEFA1Dp1GE0c.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.incorm.org%2fjournal" \t "_blank) |