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| **Del Prete, Juan (1897 –Vasto, Chieti, Italy; Died: – Buenos Aires, 1987)** |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| While Juan Del Prete’s legacy begins with the introduction of visual abstraction to Argentina through two exhibitions of his work in 1933 and 1934 (both at the Asociación Amigos del Arte in Buenos Aires), Del Prete’s 40 year oeuvre is largely characterised by experimentation in a variety of modernist styles. Born in Italy, Del Prete immigrated to Argentina in 1909 and studied briefly at the Academia Perugino and Mutualidad de Estudiantes de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires, participating in the *El Bermellón* Group. Much of his early work was representational, and included landscapes like *Nota campestre* (1925).In 1926, Del Prete exhibited with the progressive organisation the Asociación Amigos del Arte, who awarded him a scholarship to study abroad in France (1929-33). Del Prete was one of many Latin American artists living and working in Paris, and took part in a rich artistic exchange with Hans Arp, Massimo Campigli, Rachel Forner, Joaquín Torres García, Jean Hélion, and Georges Vantongerloo. Del Prete joined the Abstraction-Création group in 1932. In Paris, Del Prete exhibited with the Salon des Surindépendants (1930-33), Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Huit artistes du Rio de la Plata, Galerie Castelucho-Dianan and the Première Exposition du Groupe Latino-Americain de Paris (1930), while Gallery Zak held an exhibition of Del Prete’s work in 1930, as did Galerie Vavin in 1931. Del Prete’s work from this period includes colourful geometric compositions including *Abstracción* (1932). |
| While Juan Del Prete’s legacy begins with the introduction of visual abstraction to Argentina through two exhibitions of his work in 1933 and 1934 (both at the Asociación Amigos del Arte in Buenos Aires), Del Prete’s 40 year oeuvre is largely characterised by experimentation in a variety of modernist styles. Born in Italy, Del Prete immigrated to Argentina in 1909 and studied briefly at the Academia Perugino and Mutualidad de Estudiantes de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires, participating in the *El Bermellón* Group. Much of his early work was representational, and included landscapes like *Nota campestre* (1925).In 1926, Del Prete exhibited with the progressive organisation the Asociación Amigos del Arte, who awarded him a scholarship to study abroad in France (1929-33). Del Prete was one of many Latin American artists living and working in Paris, and took part in a rich artistic exchange with Hans Arp, Massimo Campigli, Rachel Forner, Joaquín Torres García, Jean Hélion, and Georges Vantongerloo. Del Prete joined the Abstraction-Création group in 1932. In Paris, Del Prete exhibited with the Salon des Surindépendants (1930-33), Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Huit artistes du Rio de la Plata, Galerie Castelucho-Dianan and the Première Exposition du Groupe Latino-Americain de Paris (1930), while Gallery Zak held an exhibition of Del Prete’s work in 1930, as did Galerie Vavin in 1931. Del Prete’s work from this period includes colourful geometric compositions including *Abstracción* (1932).  [File: Juan.jpg]  Figure 1 Juan Del Prete. *Abstracción*. 1932. Oil on canvas. 142.3 x 114 cm. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires  <http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/cultura/arteargentino/02dossiers/concretos/gr2_histo1_12.php>  Del Prete returned to Argentina in 1933, and the seminal debut of his abstract paintings and sculpture at *Los Amigos del Arte* included non-figural paintings, plaster carvings, and wire works such as *Estructura en alamabre* (1933), and maquettes for stage sets and masks. The 1940s saw Del Prete experimenting with stylistic languages ranging from neo-cubist works, to the graphic *Composición Geométrica Triangulares* (1942) and *Composición geométrica* (1949). In 1950, the artist returned to Europe and exhibited at the Venice Biennale (1952 /1958), and the 1950s saw Del Prete’s producing work including *Abstracción tropical* (1957) and *Composición en rojo* (1959). In the second half of the 20th century, Del Prete was honoured with a number of retrospectives, including the Secretaría de Cultura de la Nación, Buenos Aires (1950); the Museo de Artes Plásticas Eduardo Sívori, Buenos Aires (1951); the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (1961); the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Chile (1963); and the Lorenzutti Artes Antigüedades, Buenos Aires (1963). The artist’s work was included in an exhibition highlighting national art in the honourable mention category at the Guggenheim Foundation in New York (1960), the *International Art Exhibition* in Punta del Este, Uruguay (1959), and the *150 años de arte argentino* in Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires (1960). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he continued to produce work such as *Festival* (1963) and, influenced by the painterly texture of Art Informel, the artist introduced drips and impasto to his work. In 1981, Del Prete received the Cavalliere nell'Ordine al Mérito from the Italian government and in 2007, a posthumous retrospective was held at the Centro Cultural Recoleta in Buenos Aires. List of Works *Nota campestre* (1925)  *Abstracción* (1932),  *Estructura en alamabre* (1933)  *Composición geométrica* (1949)  *Composición con elementos geométricos* (1949)  *Abstracción tropical* (1957)  *Composición en rojo* (1959)  *Festival* (1963) |
| Further reading:  (Del Prete)  (Squirru and Prete)  (Meril)  (Prete)  (Museo de Art Moderno) |