

# The Malevich Archive

on microfiche



Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

▣ IDC

## Introduction

The Malevich Archive in the *Stedelijk Museum*, Amsterdam, was acquired in 1971 from the heirs of Mr. Hans von Riesen. Hans von Riesen and his brother had served as interpreters for Malevich during his stay in Germany in 1927. Malevich left a substantial collection of manuscripts with the von Riesen family at the time of his departure. In 1953 the manuscripts were found in the basement of von Riesen's house, which had been destroyed by bombs during the war. Hans von Riesen transcribed and edited a translation of one of the texts in the collection (*Suprematismus - Die gegenstandslose Welt*, Cologne 1962).

The texts remained in the possession of Mr. von Riesen's family and were inaccessible until 1969, when negotiations for their acquisition began. Publication of parts of the archive followed in 1976 and 1978, when English translations of a number of texts appeared (K.S. Malevich: *The World as Non-Objectivity. Essays on Art, Vol. III*, Copenhagen 1976 and *The Artist, Infinity, Suprematism, Essays on Art, Vol. IV*, Copenhagen 1978, both Borgens Forlag).

All research on Malevich's writings has to face the problem of his style and often highly personal use of language, full of ambiguities and complex allusions. Any translation is bound to be an interpretation, and discussions are often centered around the meaning and rendering of one or two key words. So far, attempts to bring out a Russian edition of Malevich's writings have not succeeded. It is therefore of great importance that the archive in the *Stedelijk Museum* is now accessible for general study.

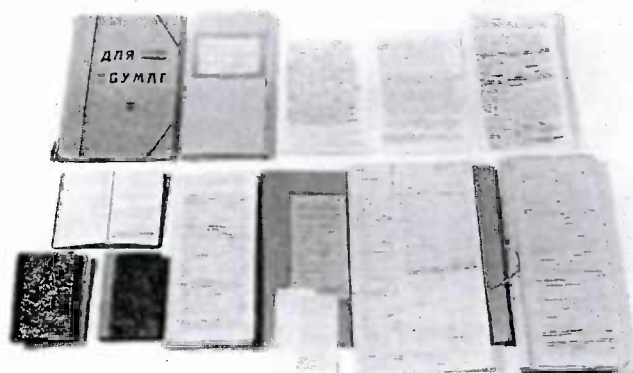
The texts in the archive date from 1913 to 1927. The earliest texts are short, poetic outbursts that lead up to Malevich's first published booklet in 1915. Some of them can be characterized as prose poems rather than aesthetic statements. The next important group of writings dates from Malevich's stay in Vitebsk (1921) and includes the complete manuscript for the proposed edition of the book *Suprematism. Mir kak bespredmetnost'* from 1922. This early version never appeared in its entirety, although it was announced for publication in 1922. No other texts from the Vitebsk period seem to have survived outside the *Stedelijk Museum* archive.

Malevich had the practice of keeping continuous notebooks in which he entered the first versions of his longer texts, together with notes and references that he thought relevant for the development of his ideas. The collection in Amsterdam contains four such notebooks, three of which, dating from 1923-24, are extremely important. Only one is known to exist outside the *Stedelijk Museum* archive.

The collection also contains important parts of Malevich's main philosophical work, *The World as Non-Objectivity* (first collected and published in *Essays on Art, Vol. III*, 1976). This work in particular has aroused lively discussion with respect to the interpretation of the Russian texts, the majority of which will now be accessible.

Today, there is no longer any need to stress the importance of Malevich's written legacy. His impact as an artist is universally recognized. His writings serve as an inspiration for artists, poets, and art historians in the Soviet Union as well as in the Western world. It is in the best Dutch tradition to have given shelter to Malevich's works and writings during the decades of trouble and oblivion.

Troels Andersen



## Handwritten texts

- 1  
Novaya zhizn' chelovechestva ...  
(Mankind's new life ...)  
March 1921, Vitebsk 60 pp., 46 x 18 cm.
- 2  
O metodakh khudozhestvenno-professional'nogo  
obrazovaniya  
(On the methods of professional artistic education)  
1921 6 pp., 34 x 18,5 cm.
- 3  
Mysl'  
(Thought)  
Jan. 31, 1921 9 pp., 45,5 x 18 cm.
- 4  
Suprematizm. Mir kak bespredmetnost'.  
Chast' I--II--III  
(Suprematism. The World as Non-Objectivity.  
Part I--II--III)  
Feb. 1922 153 pp., 37 x 17,5 cm.
- 5  
Proizvodstvo kak bezumie  
(Production as insanity)  
Feb. 1922 52 pp., 45,5 x 18,5 cm.
- 6  
Ya nachalo vsego ...  
(I am the beginning of everything ...)  
1913 5 pp., 22,5 x 18 cm.
- 7  
Khudozhnik  
(The artist)  
1913 2 pp., 22,5 x 18 cm.
- 8  
V prirode sushchestvuet ...  
(In natura exists ...)  
(1913?) 7 pp., 22,5 x 17 cm.
- 9  
Futurizm - Suprematizm  
(Futurism - Suprematism)  
March 1921 46 pp., 45 x 18 cm.
- 10  
Len' kak deystvitel'naya istina ...  
(Laziness as the true essence ...)  
Feb. 15, 1921 5 pp., 44 x 18 cm.
- 11  
(Fragment of 1.48, untitled)  
(1924?) 6 pp., 37 x 17 cm.
- 12  
(Fragment of ms, with testament by Malevich  
concerning his manuscript)  
1927 1 p., 34 x 18,5 cm.
- 13  
(Fragment of ms.) III k str. 12 (III, to page 12)  
(Presumably to page 12 of 'Mankind's new life ...')  
(1921?) 1 p., 34 x 18,5 cm.
- 14  
Otrezh' pal'tsy ...  
(Cut off your fingers ...)  
(1913?) 4 pp., 16,5 x 8,5 cm.
- 15  
(Note on) 'Obraz i vozhd' (the image and the leader)  
(ca. 1923-1924?) 1 p., 17,5 x 21,5 cm.
- 16  
Opysanie eksperimentov nad zhivopistsami.  
Obrazi ego materializatsia  
(A description of experiments on painters. The image  
and its materialisation)  
(after 1925?) 20 pp., 17,5 x 21,5 cm.
- 17  
(Fragments of mss. on Suprematism)  
(April/May 1927) 11 pp., 33 x 21 cm.

microfiche no.:

- 1 - 3  
3 - 4  
4  
4 - 11  
11 - 13  
14  
14  
14  
14 - 15  
15  
15 - 16  
16  
16  
16  
16 - 17

18

(Draughts for letters to K. Schwitters and  
L. Moholy-Nagy).  
April 1927 2 pp., 33 x 21 cm.

## Typewritten texts

- 19  
(Fragment of letter)  
(after 1926) 1 p., 34 x 31,5 cm.
- 20-29: texts for the book *The World as Non-Objectivity*
- 20  
1.41. Filosofiya kaleidoskopa  
(1.41. The Philosophy of the Kaleidoscope)  
20 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- 21  
Khudozhestvennoe nachalo  
(The Artistic Beginning)  
1922 14 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- 22  
Iz 1.42. Bespredmetnost'  
(From 1.42. Non-Objectivity)  
8 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- 23  
Suprematizm. Mir kak bespredmetnost' ili vechny  
pokoy  
(Suprematism. The World as Non-Objectivity or  
eternal Rest; Page 4-10 from 1.42)  
8 pp., 35,2 x 22 cm.
- 24  
1.45. Vvedeniye v teoriyu pribavochnogo elementa  
(1.45. An Introduction to the Theory of the Additional  
Element in Painting)  
July 3-7, 1926 proofs, 38 pp.
- 25  
1.46. Sovremennoye Iskusstvo  
(1.46. Contemporary Art)  
1924 20 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- 26  
1.47. Novoye Iskusstvo  
(1.47. New Art)  
1924 22,5 x 18 cm.
- 27  
1.47. Novoye Iskusstvo  
(Identical copy of 26)
- 28  
1.49. Mir kak bespredmetnost'  
(1.49. The World as Non-Objectivity)  
1923 20 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- 29  
Iz knigi o bespredmetnosti  
(From the Book on Non-Objectivity)  
Jan. 25, 1924 30 pp., 35,5 x 22 cm.
- ## Notebooks
- 30  
(A 1923 II) 190 pp., 17,5 x 11 cm.
- 31  
(B 1923 I) 237 pp., 17,5 x 11 cm.
- 32  
(1924 III) 365 pp., 17,5 x 11 cm.
- 33  
(1926-27) 76 pp., 17,5 x 11 cm.  
(including some pages with questions and answers in  
German)
- ## Miscellaneous
- 34  
Review of the programme
- 35  
Clippings

microfiche no.:

- 17  
17  
17 - 18  
18 - 19  
19  
19 - 20  
28  
20  
28 - 29  
29 - 30  
21  
22 - 23  
31 - 35  
35 - 39  
39 - 45  
45 - 46  
23  
23 - 27

# General information

Scope	35 handwritten texts, type-written texts, notebooks, and clippings
Number of fiches	46
Size of fiches	105 x 148 mm
Film type	Positive silver halide
Reduction ratio	1 : 18
Internal finding aids	Eye-legible headers on each fiche
ISBN	3 85750 0336
Order number	KO-1414/1

