GOETHEANUM COMMUNICATIONS

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**“Colour symphony”**

**First comprehensive biography of the painter Gerard Wagner**

**With her book ‘A Life With Colour’ Caroline Chanter presents the first comprehen-sive biography of the painter Gerard Wagner (1906–1999). Wagner understood the colours as an alphabet and looked for objective principles in the encounter with the being of colour.**

“Gerard Wagner‘s paintings are colour symphonies in themselves whilst motifs as such recede into the background,” is how Caroline Chanter describes the painter‘s work from the 1990s onwards. This is not about losing oneself in colour, though, but working with the inner, living and moving qualities of colour. One can observe this particularly well in the metamorphosis series, where one motif transforms into another, retaining coherence whilst possessing independence at the same time.

In 1924 Gerard Wagner spent time in the art colony of St Ives, Cornwall, United Kingdom, studying with the landscape painter John Anthony Park. He learned from Park that colour expression is more important than form. Later, the young artist studied at the Royal College of Art in London (UK).

It was Hookway Cowles who introduced him to Anthroposophy. In 1926 Wagner and Cowles travelled to the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. The impressions Gerard Wagner absorbed there turned what was intended to be a short visit into a lifelong stay. He deeply studied Anthroposophy and the artistic impulses it has inspired in eurythmy, drama, speech, sculpting and painting, above all with Henni Geck. Through colour experiments he explored objective principles of the essence of colour. Gerard Wagner encompassed this in the words, “It paints in me”. Individuality, he said, was expressed in the “direction” of the artistic activity. In 1997, Wagner‘s work was shown in an international exhibition at Menshikov Palace, a wing of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg.

Caroline Chanter, who studied with Gerard Wagner and is now head of the Dornach painting school founded by him, traces the life of this searching painter, contemplating both external stages and inner motives, and including many photos and illustrations.

(2064 characters/SJ; English by Margot M. Saar)

**Book** Caroline Chanter: Gerard Wagner. A Life with Colour, 664pp (236 plates), £35.00, Rudolf Steiner Press **Web** www.rudolfsteinerpress.com/viewbook.php?isbn\_in=9781855845954

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