

Chapter 1 : De Stijl - Wikipedia

Neo-Plasticism abolished the figure-ground dichotomy by using an irregular grid structure that resisted arranging the pictorial elements into a hierarchy. This all-over composition created a unity that Mondrian felt underscored the disharmony of the surrounding environment.

He writes, "this new plastic idea will ignore the particulars of appearance, that is to say, natural form and colour. On the contrary, it should find its expression in the abstraction of form and colour, that is to say, in the straight line and the clearly defined primary colour". With these constraints, his art allows only primary colours and non-colours, only squares and rectangles, only straight and horizontal or vertical lines. The "plastic vision" of De Stijl artists, also called Neo-Plasticism, saw itself as reaching beyond the changing appearance of natural things to bring an audience into intimate contact with an immutable core of reality, a reality that was not so much a visible fact as an underlying spiritual vision. Furthermore, their formal vocabulary was limited to the primary colours, red, yellow, and blue, and the three primary values, black, white, and grey. The works avoided symmetry and attained aesthetic balance by the use of opposition. This element of the movement embodies the second meaning of *stijl*: De Stijl was influenced by Cubist painting as well as by the mysticism and the ideas about "ideal" geometric forms such as the "perfect straight line" in the neoplatonic philosophy of mathematician M. The De Stijl movement was also influenced by Neopositivism. However, it did not follow the general guidelines of an "-ism". In music, De Stijl was an influence only on the work of composer Jakob van Domselaer, a close friend of Mondrian. This minimalistic and, at the time, revolutionary music defined "horizontal" and "vertical" musical elements and aimed at balancing those two principles. Van Domselaer was relatively unknown in his lifetime, and did not play a significant role within De Stijl.

Early history[edit] From the flurry of new art movements that followed the Impressionist revolutionary new perception of painting, Cubism arose in the early 20th century as an important and influential new direction. In the Netherlands, too, there was interest in this "new art". During that period, Theo van Doesburg started looking for other artists to set up a journal and start an art movement. Van Doesburg was also a writer, poet, and critic, who had been more successful writing about art than working as an independent artist. Mondrian, who had moved to Paris in and there, changed his name from "Mondriaan", had been visiting the Netherlands when war broke out. These two publications would greatly influence Mondrian and other members of De Stijl. Van Doesburg also knew J. In the cooperation of these artists, together with the poet Anthony Kok, resulted in the founding of De Stijl. The young architect Gerrit Rietveld joined the group in . At its height De Stijl had members and the journal had a circulation of . Manifestos were being published, signed by all members. The social and economic circumstances of the time formed an important source of inspiration for their theories, and their ideas about architecture were heavily influenced by Berlage and Frank Lloyd Wright. The name *Nieuwe Beelding* was a term first coined in by Mondrian, who wrote a series of twelve articles called *De Nieuwe Beelding in de schilderkunst* "Neo-Plasticism in Painting" that were published in the journal *De Stijl*. These influences were mainly Malevich and Russian Constructivism, to which not all members agreed. In Mondrian broke with the group after van Doesburg proposed the theory of elementarism, suggesting that a diagonal line is more vital than horizontal and vertical ones. In addition, the De Stijl group acquired many new "members". Dadaist influences, such as I. Private courses, introduction of the Cubist architecture of "De Stijl", His wife, Nelly, administered his estate. Individual members remained in contact, but De Stijl could not exist without a strong central character. Thus, it may be wrong to think of De Stijl as a close-knit group of artists. The members knew each other, but most communication took place by letter. For example, Mondrian and Rietveld never met in person. Rietveld, for instance, continued designing furniture according to De Stijl principles, while Mondrian continued working in the style he had initiated around Van der Leek, on the other hand, went back to figurative compositions after his departure from the group.

Influence on architecture[edit] The De Stijl influence on architecture remained considerable long after its inception; Mies van der Rohe was among the most important proponents of its ideas. Examples of Stijl-influenced works by J. Present day[edit] Works by De Stijl members are scattered all

over the world, but De Stijl-themed exhibitions are organised regularly. The movement inspired the design aesthetics of Rumyantsevo and Salaryevo stations of Moscow Metro opened in

Chapter 2 : De Stijl Movement | World History Project

Mondrian launched his new art in his long essay Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art (De Nieuwe Beelding in de Schilderkunst), which was published in twelve instalments in De Stijl magazine (). Thereafter, all members of the De Stijl movement who signed the movement's manifesto were committed to the theory of Neo-Plasticism.

He subscribed to two sets of philosophical beliefs; theosophy, a religious mysticism which sought to help humanity achieve perfection, and anthroposophy, which held that the spiritual world was directly accessible through the development of the inner self. His works were thus aimed at helping humanity through aesthetic beauty and breaking from a representational form of painting. He published his explanation of neo-plasticism in his art publication *De Stijl* The Style in and . Although his early work was representational, he slowly developed his artistic philosophy, his works slowly devolving first into cubism, then to pure abstraction and non-representation. After WWI, he flourished in the post-war atmosphere of Paris, which allowed him pure creative freedom. It was in his Manhattan studio where he felt most creative, and in which he created his great masterpieces. Mondrian was an avid painter, and would paint until his hands blistered. Sometimes he made himself sick, and others he made himself cry from exhaustion. While in his Manhattan apartment, he rearranged large colored panels on his walls, and painted other portions, rearranging and moving the panels as he completed his canvas paintings, or as he completed periods of painting. He later said that his ever-changing surroundings in his Manhattan studio was the best space he ever inhabited. He is known for being one of the pioneers of 20th century abstract art , as he changed his artistic direction from figurative painting to an increasingly abstract style, until he reached a point where his artistic vocabulary was reduced to simple geometric elements. He proclaimed in *Art is higher than reality and has no direct relation to reality. To approach the spiritual in art, one will make as little use as possible of reality, because reality is opposed to the spiritual. We find ourselves in the presence of an abstract art. Art should be above reality, otherwise it would have no value for man. His art, however, always remained rooted in nature.* He was a contributor to the De Stijl art movement and group, which he co-founded with Theo van Doesburg. He evolved a non-representational form which he termed Neoplasticism. To express this, Mondrian eventually decided to limit his formal vocabulary to the three primary colors red, blue and yellow , the three primary values black, white and gray and the two primary directions horizontal and vertical. Color Field painting, Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism , but also fields outside the domain of painting, such as design, architecture and fashion. Design historian Stephen Bayley said: His name and his work sum up the High Modernist ideal. The family moved to Winterswijk when his father, Pieter Cornelius Mondriaan, was appointed head teacher at a local primary school. Mondrian was introduced to art from an early age. His father was a qualified drawing teacher, and, with his uncle, Fritz Mondriaan a pupil of Willem Maris of the Hague School of artists , the younger Piet often painted and drew along the river Gein. He was already qualified as a teacher. He began his career as a teacher in primary education, but he also practiced painting. Most of his work from this period is naturalistic or Impressionistic , consisting largely of landscapes. These pastoral images of his native country depict windmills, fields, and rivers, initially in the Dutch Impressionist manner of the Hague School and then in a variety of styles and techniques that attest to his search for a personal style. These paintings are representational, and they illustrate the influence that various artistic movements had on Mondrian, including pointillism and the vivid colors of Fauvism.

Chapter 3 : Neo-Plasticism: Definition, Characteristics, History

In the first eleven issues of the journal De Stijl, Piet Mondrian published his long essay Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art in which among much else he wrote: As a pure representation of the human mind, art will express itself in an aesthetically purified, that is to say, abstract form.

De Stijl - The Modern Plastic Art Movement July 4, Widewalls Editorial Deeply invested in modern and contemporary art, the Widewalls magazine aims at providing a unique experience for its readers in the form of in-depth and quality journalism. There is one quote by Piet Mondrian which could be used to define De Stijl in one sentence alone: De Stijl, which ambitiously means The Style, was conceived in the Netherlands by a group of artists who centered around the idea to fathom the purity of form and the reality of nature, supposedly obscured by figuration. Having the time of its inauguration in mind, it should be clear that this urge to redefine, or even reinvent reality comes from a feeling of anxiety and disappointment caused by the First World War. Just like the cubists had the capacity to see things through abstract shapes combined, and the futurists saw a single movement in all of its stages, the protagonists of De Stijl – especially painters – were inclined to understand nature as a combination of relationships, rather than of actual physical forms. Their visual expression was radicalized by a self-invented vocabulary that functioned according to its own system, consisting of orthogonal lines and primary colors as the most basic tools for non-verbal communication. These elements are sometimes wrongly interpreted as shapes, which they obviously are, but it is not what they aim to represent. The idea was not to repeatedly paint red, white, blue and yellow rectangles outlined with black lines in order to discuss their mere appearance, but to capture the sensations that come through our eyes, and to translate them into the domain of the cognitive. Thus, De Stijl was a bit like telling a story, or even writing poetry using visual cues, which some of us are not able to contemplate even in this day and age. And even when the story ended in , partly due to the untimely death of Theo van Doesburg and partly because of the socio-political situation in soon-to-be Nazi Germany, its legacy remained, heralding the character of the 20th century as we know it today. Beside painting and sculpture, it made significant impact on typography, architecture and design, and even music at some point. However, all of these genres were strongly influenced by painting, which is somewhat logical, given that painting could be considered a foundation for other media. De Stijl architecture was no exception of course, but since building takes longer than painting, there are not as many examples that adhere to the principles of De Stijl entirely. The other thing is utility of course, which introduces the second most important characteristic of De Stijl architecture. Since De Stijl was one of the pioneers of the Sullivan-derived form-follows-function practice, most of the things you know about modern architecture applies to De Stijl architecture as well. It was, however, preceded by the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright, whose influence on De Stijl assisted the formulation of this architectural style to a great extent. The other important influence comes from Hendrik Petrus Berlage, a prominent Dutch architect whose work is often regarded as an interim stage between traditionalism and modernism in the Netherlands. Only blue, red and yellow were used to outline certain elements of De Stijl design, otherwise the surface was painted in white, grey or black the non-colors. This was applied both to the facade and the interior of a building, and obviously to furniture design as well. For this new art it is absolutely necessary to dispose over definite elements. Statements like this, and the general approach of De Stijl made it vulnerable to numerous misinterpretations. Just like the majority of Modern art movements, De Stijl was fighting to find an equilibrium between being exclusive, or even extremist, and advocating universality and global equality. Interestingly, it was made the same year that the style was officially announced Two groups were very much alike in many aspects, and their mutual influence gave meaningful results, both for the Bauhaus and De Stijl. Nonetheless, Oud is still considered to be one of the most important Modernist architects. He later became involved in anarchistic activities. Today, we use it to define a very specific art group, which connected the abstract and functional architecture through the work of its major representatives: This book is the first to place the emphasis on the local context of De Stijl and explore its relationship to the distinctive character of Dutch modernism. The connection between debates concerning abstraction in painting and spatiality in architecture

are examined, as well as the contemporary developments in the fields of urban planning, advertising, interior design and exhibition design. From a historical perspective, the book explores the relationship and the interaction between the world of mass culture and the fine arts. This point of view, of searching for the new form of artistic expression, marked the 20th-century art and major Avant-garde movements that sprung during this period. With this in mind, we need to consider the importance Mondrian left; not only in his legacy of paintings and design concepts but more importantly as one of the artist-metaphysicians of our time, we need to acknowledge his views regarding the artistic language and his philosophical reflections. As one of the founders of the Dutch style De Stijl, Mondrian was recognized for the purity of abstraction and methodical practice by which he arrived at it. The harsh reduction and simplicity of his non-representational art, which he named neoplasticism, hides a more mystical approach to the world. Piet Mondrian's "Evening, Red Tree." Yet, his early paintings, influenced by the choice of subject matter and approach to colors imposed by the Impressionism, more importantly, Post-Impressionism artists such as Vincent Van Gogh and painting technique of Georges Seurat, show a degree of abstraction but they are in most cases marked as Naturalistic and fall under a category of landscape paintings. The early pastoral paintings of his native country, the Netherlands, depict windmills, fields, and rivers, and they also help to illustrate a variety of influences a number of art movements, such as pointillism and Fauvism had on Mondrian. It is his painting Evening: Red Tree that seems to suggest his later development towards geometrical abstraction and his use of primary colors. But, where did he differ? The major difference between Mondrian and the Paris avant-garde lies in the fact that with his art Mondrian from the beginning attempted to reconcile or fuse together the art and the mystical. His paintings and his writings, which reflected his theories about art, spirituality, philosophy, and the new look and expression of the natural universal laws, were with him from the beginning. Prior to coming to Paris, in he joined the Theosophical Society, a spiritual organization based on the teachings of Buddhism. The mystical, the intuitive, the universal, the need to reach pure harmony, all of this Mondrian attempted to express in his work that was gradually becoming more and more abstract. What he aimed to express was the spiritual energy and the balance of forces that ruled nature and the universe, and to this desire we owe the simplification of nature to horizontal and vertical lines, which represented the two opposing forces: Piet Mondrian's "Composition C." It was also during this time, that the artist needed to return back home, but the outburst of the World War I forced him to stay in Netherlands during the brutal conflicts. While at home he met Bart van der Leek and Theo van Doesburg. The two artists were also attempting to reach pure abstraction and the joined forces marked the beginning of De Stijl. Advocating the pure abstraction and a pared down palette of colors in order to express a Utopian ideal of universal harmony in all of the arts, De Stijl was a major avant-garde movement emphasizing abstraction. The artists believed that their vision of modern art would transcend divisions in culture and become a shared language based on the primary colors and flatness of forms. The simple geometrical shapes and the grid lines hid metaphysical ideas of universal laws that Mondrian attempted to explain in his famous publication on abstract art The New Plastic in Painting. The plastic in the title and in the name of the new form of art referred to the new way of representing reality found upon the surface of the artwork itself. This newfound abstraction and the need for a universal language reflected itself in the future titles of his painting that were often named and labeled purely as Compositions. It was due to his utopian ideals and understanding of the representational quality of abstraction that Mondrian is viewed as one of the important artists that helped the development of modern art. While he was still alive and even after his death the impact of his thoughts and paintings was influential. His paintings continued to develop but they remained faithful to his views that nature and its hidden dynamic forces are best described with the use of lines, grids, and primary colors. Where the lines met, the magic and pure forces of nature were expressed. The Art of Destruction This volume explores the work of Mondrian, one of the great innovators of abstract art. The focus is put on the analysis of the interrelations between his paintings and the theory of art he professed, paralleled with his views on life, taken from the public writings and mainly unpublished letters. Theo and Nelly van Doesburg, Famous De Stijl Artists Apart from the founding members of the magazine De Stijl that announced the emergence of the new art movement, the search for laws of equilibrium and harmony applicable both to art and life that De Stijl stood for, has attracted many prominent artists and architects of the

time. The work of architects associated with De Stijl has helped give rise to the International Style of the 1920s and 1930s. The ultimate simplicity, abstraction and the color theory of De Stijl have influenced many artists that followed, from Max Ball to Mark Rothko. With Mondrian and other prominent figures of the movement-to-be, he founded the magazine *De Stijl* in 1917. As an ambassador of the movement, he promoted it all across Europe. He created numerous abstract paintings and designed buildings, room decorations, stained glass, furniture and household items in a simplified geometric aesthetic that De Stijl advocated. The style that emphasized subtle shifts in tones, tilted geometric shapes and colored straight and disconnected lines, became his own version of De Stijl called Elementarism. The variety he wanted to infuse in the movement led to the split with Mondrian in 1930. For him, abstraction had a unique quality to achieve social order and harmony. He designed the cover for the first issue of the magazine *De Stijl* and contributed greatly to defining the Neo-Plasticism with numerous articles. While involved in the movement, he produced various abstract works, industrial and commercial graphic works, and collaborated on numerous interior design projects such as for the home of the industrialist Bruynzeel. Additionally, he designed furniture with Piet Zwart from 1925 to 1930. After the outbreak of the World War II, he moved to the small Dutch town of Hierden where he painted the landscape around him. Since 1930, he was focused on finding a pure non-objective language. His designs had a sleek shape with the emphasis on horizontal and vertical lines, but were also very vital and organic. One of his most notable works is the Olympic stadium for the Summer Olympics in Amsterdam that has also won the gold medal in the Olympic art competition. He worked on several projects with Van Doesburg before their split in 1930, including the refurbishment of the now demolished restaurant Dual Key in Woerden. After designing the housing complex Papaverhof in The Hague, he became deeply interested in problems of urban housing. Oud, was a Dutch architect that got involved with the movement in 1917. He was appointed Municipal Housing Architect for Rotterdam between 1920 and 1925. Working mostly on socially progressive residential projects around Netherlands, he is now best known for his remarkable works for housing schemes in expanding areas. Thus, he is considered a pioneer of the Dutch Functionalist architecture. From 1925, he was considered one of the four best modern architects along with Ludwig Mies van der rohe, Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier. Ilya Bolotowsky Ilya Bolotowsky Russian-born painter Ilya Bolotowsky was a student of Piet Mondrian who has made a significant contribution to the American geometric abstraction. These neo-plastic paintings characterized his work throughout his career. He created the mural for the Williamsburg Housing Project in Brooklyn that was the first mural commissioned by the Federal Art Project. He always emphasized the role of the intuition over formula regarding his compositions. He also joined the artist collective The Ten along with Adolph Gottlieb and Mark Rothko that advocated for new forms of abstraction and rejected the establishment. His most famous piece was the Red and Blue Chair from 1926. He aimed for simplicity in his designs and hoped his furniture would be mass-produced. After getting involved with the De Stijl movement, he started exhibiting worldwide. It has a conventional ground floor but the radical top floor had sliding walls that could create and change the living spaces. After abandoning De Stijl in 1930, he started designing buildings in a more functionalist style. The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam that he started working on in 1930 was finished after his death. Georges Vantongerloo Georges Vantongerloo, source The Ditch architect and theorist Georges Vantongerloo has collaborated on the magazine *De Stijl* with other leading figures of the movement. He was also involved with abstract painting and sculpture. Often writing for the magazine, he formulated his theories about art and the role of the artist that revealed his belief in abstraction and preferences for mystic and scientific theories and concepts. After moving to Menton in France, he associated with the artist and architect Max Bill who has organized many of his exhibitions. There he has developed a color theory where he exchanged three primary colors by De Stijl artists with seven main colors of the spectrum.

Neo-Plasticism, which can be best described as a philosophy, attempted a total overhaul and purification of all art that had come before in its exclusive application of horizontal and vertical lines and primary colors, black, and white.

Introduction The life of modern cultured man is gradually turning away from the natural: The life of truly modern man is directed neither toward the material for its own sake, nor toward the predominantly emotional: Modern man "although a unity of body, soul and mind" shows a changed consciousness: Art too, as the product of a new duality in man, is now expressed as the product of cultivated outwardness and of a deeper, more conscious inwardness. As pure creation of the human mind, art is expressed as pure aesthetic creation, manifested in abstract form. The truly modern artist consciously perceives the abstractness of the emotion of beauty: This conscious recognition results in an abstract creation, directs him toward the purely universal. That is why the new art cannot be manifested as naturalistic concrete representation, which "even where universal vision is present" always points more or less to the particular, or in any case conceals the universal within it. The new plastic cannot be cloaked by what is characteristic of the particular, natural form and color, but must be expressed by the abstraction of form and color "by means of the straight line and determinate primary color. These universal plastic means were discovered in modern painting by the process of consistent abstraction of form and color: Thus the new art is the determinate plastic expression of aesthetic relationships. The contemporary artist constructs the new plastic expression in painting as a consequence of all previous creation "in painting, precisely because it is least restricted. The growing profundity of the whole of modern life can be purely reflected in painting. In painting "in pictorial not decorative painting" naturalistic expression and naturalistic means become more inward, are intensified into the abstract. Decorative art did no more than to generalize natural form and color. Thus the feeling for the aesthetic expression of relationship was brought to clarity in and by pictorial painting. Although the content of all art is one, the possibilities of plastic expression are different for each art. These possibilities must be discovered by each art and remain limited by its bounds. Therefore the possibilities of one art cannot be viewed from those of another, but must be considered independently, and only in relation to the art concerned. Every art has its own emphasis, its particular expression: We can now define the emphasis of the art of painting as the most consistent expression of pure relationships. In painting, the duality of relationships can be shown in juxtaposition on one plane, which is impossible in architecture or sculpture. The sister arts, sculpture and architecture are less free in this respect. The other arts are even less free in transforming their plastic means: Painting is capable of consistent intensification and interiorization of its plastic means without overstepping their limits. Neoplastic painting remains pure painting: With the advancing culture of the spirit, all the arts, despite their different expressions, become more and more the plastic creation of equilibrated, determinate relationship: Through equilibrated relationship, unity, harmony, universality are plastically expressed amid separateness, multiplicity, individuality "the natural. When we concentrate upon equilibrated relationship, we can see unity in the natural. In the natural, however, unity is manifested only in a veiled way. Although inexactly expressed in the natural, all appearance can nevertheless be reduced to this manifestation [of unity]. Therefore the exact plastic expression of unity can be created, must be created, because it is not directly apparent in visible reality. In nature, we perceive that all relationship is governed by one relationship above all others: The abstract plastic of relationship expresses this basic relationship determinately "by duality of position, the perpendicular. This relationship of position is the most equilibrated because it expresses the relationship of extreme opposition in complete harmony and includes all other relationships. If we see these two extremes as manifestations of the inward and the outward, we find that in Neoplastic the bond between spirit and life is unbroken "we see Neoplastic not as denying the full life, but as the reconciliation of the matter-mind duality. If through contemplation we recognize that the existence of all things is aesthetically determined for us by equilibrated relationships, then the idea of this manifestation of unity already had its seed in our consciousness: Thus art must necessarily express itself determinately. Only when the individual no longer stands in the way can universality be purely manifested. Only then can universal consciousness

intuition "wellspring of all the arts" express itself directly; a purer art arises. However, it does not arise before its time. The consciousness of an age determines the art expression: Only that art is truly alive which gives expression to the contemporary "the future" consciousness. Then, logically the consistent growth and development of abstract plastic must progress to its culmination. While one-sided development, lack of aesthetic culture, or tradition may oppose it temporarily "an abstract, a truly new plastic is necessary for the new man. Only when the new consciousness becomes more general will the new plastic become a universal need: However, the need for a new plastic exists because it has come into being through the contemporary artist: The new means testify to a new vision. If the aim of all art is to establish relationships only a more conscious vision can bring this aim to clear expression "precisely through the plastic means. If the proper intensification and use of the plastic means "composition" is the only pure plastic expression of art, then the plastic means must be in complete consonance with what they express. Composition leaves the artist the greatest possible freedom to be subjective "as long and insofar as this is necessary. The rhythm of relationship of color and dimension in determinate proportion and equilibrium permits the absolute to appear within the relativity of time and space. Thus the new plastic is dualistic through its composition. Through its exact plastic of cosmic relationship it is a direct expression of the universal; through its rhythm, through its material reality, it is an expression of the subjective, of the individual. Neoplasticism as Style The art of painting "essentially one and unchangeable" has always manifested itself in very diverse expressions. The art expressions of the past "characterized by so many styles" differ only by reason of time and place, but fundamentally they are one. However they may differ in appearance, all arose from a single source: Thus all historical styles have striven toward this single goal: Thus all style has a timeless content and a transitory appearance. The timeless universal content we can call the universality of style, and its transitory appearance the characteristic or the individuality of style. The style in which individuality best serves the universal will be the greatest: Although all painting has a timeless content, it is strictly plastic art; it can reveal style only insofar as this content actually becomes plastic. In painting style must be manifested visually: The universal in style must come to expression through the individual in style, i. The mode of stylistic expression belongs to its time, and represents the relationship of the spirit of the age to the universal. This gives to each art expression its specific character and distinguished historical styles. It is the representation of the universal, which, as philosophy also teaches, forms the very core of the human spirit even though it is veiled by our individuality. The universal expresses itself through nature as the absolute, the absolute in nature is concealed or veiled by the expression of natural color and form. Although the universal is plastically expressed as the absolute "in line by straightness, in color by planarity and purity, relationship by equilibrium" it is revealed in nature only as a tendency toward the absolute "a tendency toward the straight, the plane, the pure, the equilibrated" through tension of form line, planarity, intensity, purity of natural color and natural harmony. The aim of art is to emphasize the absolute, this is the content "universal and individual" of all style. The universal in a style makes the absolute visible through the individuality of that style. Individuality of style therefore cannot be separated from universality of style we discuss style as a duality to gain a pure conception of its meaning. Painting can express the absolute in two ways: In the first, style appears entirely in the manner of art; in the second, always more or less in the manner of nature. In the manner of nature, for nature also shows style. Indeed nature like art reveals the universality of style through the particular, the individual; for everything manifests the universal in its own way. Thus we can say that nature also shows individuality of style, but quite differently than art. In nature, individuality of style is completely bound to the particular, to the natural appearance of things; whereas in art individuality of style must be entirely free from this and is bound only by time and place. Therefore art can express style precisely, whereas in nature style remains for the most part veiled. To express style precisely, art must free itself from the natural appearance of things so as not to represent them: Painting always more or [50] less transforms the style of nature into the style of art. The artist perceives style in nature so strongly that he is automatically compelled to express style. Thus style in nature is so expressed by painting as to become relatively perceptible and visible to all. Artistic temperament, aesthetic vision, thus perceives style; ordinary vision, on the other hand, sees it neither in art nor in nature. Ordinary vision is the vision of the individual who cannot rise above particularity. As long as

materiality is seen as particular, style cannot be perceived. Thus ordinary vision obstructs all art: The artist on the other hand wants and searches for style; this is his struggle. But through this struggle against individuality within and without, his style conception grows: The universal in the artist causes him to see through the individuality that surrounds him, to see order free from individual expression. This order, however, is veiled. The natural appearance of things has evolved more or less capriciously: Although this natural order may not be immediately discernible to unpracticed eyes, it is, nevertheless, this equilibrated order that arouses the deepest emotion of harmony in the beholder. If profundity of emotion depends upon the degree of his inner harmony, then equilibrated order will be conscious to that degree. When the beholder has achieved some consciousness of cosmic harmony, then he "the artistic temperament" will require a pure expression of harmony, a pure expression of equilibrated order. If he is an artist then he will no longer follow order in the manner of nature, but will represent order in the manner of art: Equilibrated order, limited by our individuality and veiled in individuality, then appears as it actually is "as universal order: At present, equilibrated order in plastic expression is still very relative; the imperfect cannot reflect the perfect. In style in the manner of nature, on the other hand, order is always more or less bound to the appearance of nature and therefore cannot be expressed [51] precisely as equilibrated order.

Chapter 5 : Neo-Plasticism: the General Principle of Plastic Equivalence - Mondrian | ART THEORY

The artistic philosophy that formed a basis for the group's work is known as neoplasticism – "the new plastic art" (or Nieuwe Beelding in Dutch). Mondrian sets forth the delimitations of neoplasticism in his essay "Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art".

Best Artists of All Time. History of Formation De Stijl was the brainchild of the Dutch painter, designer, writer, and critic Theo van Doesburg. He then met him at an exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and, after many discussions, they formed the De Stijl art group. At the same time they also founded the De Stijl journal, edited by Van Doesburg, to which Mondrian contributed numerous articles. Although its circulation rarely exceeded copies per issue, its readership was influential within artistic circles and widespread. Membership of De Stijl rose quickly. All signed the De Stijl manifesto which committed them to the theory of Neo-Plasticism, as developed by Mondrian. Schoenmaekers, and of course the architectural designs of Frank Lloyd Wright

Neo-Plasticism - Characteristics

Neo-Plasticism "new art" is grounded in the idea that the true purpose of art is not to reproduce real objects, but to express the absolutes of life: In , he published a book entitled *Le Neo-Plasticisme*. His aim was to promulgate a new design-paradigm of harmony and order, by reducing all art to essentials of form and colour. Rejecting naturalistic art, he wrote: His Neo-Plasticism was an ideal type of abstract art which could only be expressed in the purest of forms. Thus only squares and rectangles, and only straight horizontal or vertical lines could be used; while only primary colours red, yellow and blue and the three primary values white, black and grey could be applied. In addition, he befriended the Hanover Dada artist Kurt Schwitters , with whom he toured Holland in , promoting the Dada message. The fact that he wrote under a pseudonym failed to calm his critics within the group. By this stage, however, Van Doesburg had succeeded in upsetting many other members, which led to widespread fragmentation in the group and a total lack of cohesion. Even after his death, a new abstract style known as Art Concrete evolved out of the remnants of De Stijl and the Futurists. This influence is seen most clearly in the work of the Bauhaus Design School and in the International style of modern architecture , which was taken up by numerous American architects under the influence of ex-Bauhaus designer Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, who emigrated to Chicago. For more information, see: The latter holds the largest Rietveld collection in the world.

Chapter 6 : Piet Mondrian's Neoplasticism in Painting () | Modernist Architecture

Although the spontaneous expression of intuition that is realized in the work of art (i.e., its spiritual content) can be interpreted only by verbal art, there is also the word without art: reasoning, logical explanation, through which the rationality of an art can be shown.

In fine art, the term "neo-plasticism" refers to the austere, geometrical style of concrete art developed by the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian just after the First World War. The word is a meaningless translation of the complex Dutch phrase *nieuwe beelding*, first used by the writer Matthieu Schoenmaekers in his book *Het Nieuwe Wereldbeeld The New Image of the World*, and re-used by Mondrian in his theoretical essay *De Nieuwe Beelding in de Schilderkunst*, before he adopted the French translation *Neo-Plasticisme* from which the English term is taken. It was to be a pure type of abstract art that adhered to strict rules of composition. To start with, it was promoted by *De Stijl* - the mouthpiece of the avant-garde art movement of the same name - edited by Theo van Doesburg and read by abstract painters, designers, abstract sculptors and architects in Holland, and across Europe. The Concept of Neo-Plasticism A man whose art was closely tied to his personal beliefs - namely, Theosophy, a religious philosophical movement launched by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky - Piet Mondrian sought to establish a universal art form, stripped of all naturalism and other inessentials, in order to attain the universal truths propounded by the Theosophical movement. In his essay *De Nieuwe Beelding in de Schilderkunst*, he wrote that when painting he wanted to come as close as possible to the truth until he reached the foundation of things. Through the use of non-objective art, based on fundamental structural elements - in particular, horizontal and vertical lines - together with his own intuition, he intended to create a form of art, as strong as it was true. Both these influences reflected a general dissatisfaction with pre-war artistic values - in particular, the decorative excesses of styles like Impressionism, Art Nouveau and Fauvism - and a growing faith in the power of science and its machines, which - it was felt - could best be represented by abstract paintings and sculptures. Indeed, one might regard Neo-Plasticism as the pro-art sister of Dada the anti-art movement. Both rejected the pre-war status quo and sought answers in new creative formulas. However, tensions soon emerged between the dogmatic Mondrian and other members of the group, including Van Doesburg. This abandoned the insistence on strict horizontals and verticals, introduced diagonals and acute angles as well as inclined lines. Mondrian continued to develop his new art idiom throughout the 20s and 30s. For example, he started to paint his lines right up to the edges of the canvas, and he also began replacing coloured forms with more areas of white. These tendencies are especially noticeable in his "lozenge" works of the mids. These are regular square-shaped canvases tilted degrees, to give them a diamond shape. Gradually, lines began to supercede forms: His paintings became more detailed - verging on the cartographical - with more overlapping lines than ever before. He introduced a new, more decorative style of abstraction, exemplified by *New York City I*, an intricate lattice of primary coloured lines, interlaced for extra depth. In *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, instead of his usual solid lines, Mondrian uses lines made from small adjoining rectangles of colour. Larger rimless rectangles are also included, some filled with smaller concentric rectangles. Compared to the austere Neo-Plasticism of the 20s and 30s, these final paintings have a confident, colourful vitality - no doubt reflecting the confident architecture and urban environment of Manhattan, where he lived until his death from pneumonia in 1945. For other European modernist designers who emigrated to the United States, see: *Legacy Neo-plasticism was the ultimate style of modern art. As well as abstract painting, it influenced many different types of design and architecture. It also had a specific impact on certain variants of Abstract Expressionism such as hard edge painting, and proved to be an important precursor to Minimalism. In addition to numerous articles and essays, Mondrian wrote Neo-Plasticisme published Paris, 1930, which later appeared in the German translation as Neue Gestaltung published by the Bauhaus Design School, 1931. Three other important publications include Piet Mondrian:*

Chapter 7 : neo-plasticism | Art Blart

In Mondrian published "Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art", an essay that summarized his thoughts about the aesthetics of modern art. Mondrian went on to enjoy a long and productive artistic life. He lived in Paris and for a short time in London.

Does this seem to you a reasonable assessment of the style? Give reasons for your answer. Neo-plasticism is widely acknowledged to be a hugely influential branch in the abstract arts, and one in which there is a central figure and proponent: For, after all, Mondrian is referred to by van Doesburg as the father of the neo-plastic style. Mondrian certainly falls into this category, and, much like Malevich and Kandinsky, he wrote extensively on art theory. This is the kind of claim which could only be made if all imagery being a sister of representation was eradicated from within the canvas, if the eye is given something incomprehensible, unrecognizable, flat, to apprehend. From this theoretical standpoint, Golding would seem to read Mondrian in a similar way to those who claim that there is no subject matter contained in his paintings. Fer, Batchelor and Wood This is not to say that they are entirely non-representational, but that they do not represent as subject, an object, a thing. There is no illusion of reality on the canvas: This included the elements that Mondrian saw as a hindrance to human spiritual life: This was a way of seeking the eternal, the absolute, and that this objective was always conceived of through evolution and progress. Golding With his theosophical leanings, the work became a kind of spiritual manifesto for the progress of mankind, a rational art for a new world. The tyranny of ornamentation and representation was a symbol of the old art, a form of expression that articulated nothing of the universal truth and balance he strived for: To move away from nature was to progress: Thus, for Mondrian, the imperative of the artist was to seek inspiration from a more spiritual realm. However, far from seeking abstraction in multiple viewpoints and shattering, neo-plasticism sought total unity and harmony in simplicity and a refusal to paint figuratively. For Mondrian, this manifested itself in finding a harmony between unequal but equivalent oppositions of line and colour. Wiegand This focus on purity, and pure line and colour again reinforces a belief in a universal absolute: Mondrian here ushers in a new age for art, an age characterised by rationality. He presents to us an image, on a basic level, literally devoid of visual references to the natural, a kind of sanctuary from the untidiness and the messiness of reality. In striving for an absolute reality, Mondrian eliminates decoration: This voice is, as we have seen, suggestive of modernity and rationality. But, as Greenberg suggests they give away very little: His works may appear as simplification when read in relation to the western art tradition, but this in fact may be erroneous. Wiegand argues that the works are, conversely, a visual intensification. Similarly, Darwent makes the claim that his canvases are less a full rejection of nature, but a refinement. This relation is perhaps best articulated in the pre neo-plastic Pier and Ocean series, and especially in Composition No. Whilst here nature is present, the sea, the pier, it is the relations between the marks on the canvas, and between these and the white background, which become what we read. Natural reality is positioned as a kind of primitive reading of nature, in opposition to the abstract spiritual reality which Mondrian championed in both his neo-plasticism and his philosophy. This is further evidenced in his philosophical belief in some kind of hidden but distorted universal truth. Artistic salvation here lies in the purification of the means of expression, in rational compositions, in harmony. Here, for the first time, the balance of the coloured blocks and the grid they share the canvas with, are afforded equivalent pictorial importance. We see here an artist striving to free art from the bonds of figurative painting. The way Mondrian lived his life would also point towards this distancing from natural representation: Whilst it would be difficult to make an argument that there is a figurative relation to the natural world, we can perhaps assert that his neo-plastic works are representative of something different. Mondrian, as Elgar This kind of claim points towards an intellectualization of art, a marriage between art and philosophy, which though not employed in order to justify his art, Golding, nonetheless can be criticized. Mondrian himself wrote in a personal letter of the plight of the modern painter in this respect: Mondrian refers to a kind of mentality which requires a sort of progression, a spiritual enlightenment, in order to move beyond the figurative, to a consciousness that permits the kind of transcendent art that is free of literal representation. This contention is

made with reference to his wider ethical, intellectual and philosophical concerns. Here we might see an artist concerned with using his art as an evolutionary dialogue of ideas. If we are conditioned to read art in terms of representational symbols, objects we recognise Z from natural reality, it is easy to see how the language Mondrian developed created so many difficulties. It is clear that in so completely abandoning the painterly illusions of classical art forms, Mondrian was a revolutionary. But, as Darwent reminds us, all art is a code, a system of representation: Z References Darwent, C. There must be a catch

Chapter 8 : Art History – Lesson Cubism & Neo-Plasticism – Rachel Melvin Photography

Neo-Plasticism ("new art") is grounded in the idea that the true purpose of art is not to reproduce real objects, but to express the absolutes of life: see, non-objective art. Mondrian explained his theory of Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art (De Nieuwe Beelding in de schilderkunst) in the first dozen or so issues of the journal De Stijl.

Many of the same abstract ideas came into play, as did ideas that incorporated the "machine" aesthetics of the new industrial age. In fact, one of the important trends of the 20th century would be the increasing parallels between - even merging of - art and design, which had been separated since the end of the renaissance. There was a utopian philosophical approach to aesthetics, centered in a publication called *de Stijl*, which presented their ideas and designs. The founder of the publication and leader of the group was Theo van Doesburg, an architect. Other important participants were Gerrit Rietveld and Piet Mondrian. The philosophy was based on functionalism, with a severe and doctrinaire insistence on the rectilinearity of the planes, which seem to slide across one another like sliding panels. All surface decoration except color was to be eliminated, and only pure primary hues, plus black and white were to be allowed. The most important thing about this group was their ideas, since they managed to build very few of their designs. Not only the house, but also the furnishings and decoration were planned by Rietveld. In spite of the apparently small output of this group, they would be very influential on subsequent design styles. The initial source of their ideas came from DaDa notions about dispensing with the pretentious elitist design aesthetics of the pre war era. Some of the early work of Frank Lloyd Wright, which had been published in Europe in , influenced their notions about form. Japanese sources were also of significance, though these ideas may have been derived through the work of Wright. *Art, Design, and Visual Thinking* Added by: In a narrower sense, the term *De Stijl* is used to refer to a body of work from to founded in the Netherlands. Proponents of *De Stijl* sought to express a new utopian ideal of spiritual harmony and order. They advocated pure abstraction and universality by a reduction to the essentials of form and colour; they simplified visual compositions to the vertical and horizontal directions, and used only primary colors along with black and white. On the contrary, it should find its expression in the abstraction of form and colour, that is to say, in the straight line and the clearly defined primary colour. In general, *De Stijl* proposed ultimate simplicity and abstraction, both in architecture and painting, by using only straight horizontal and vertical lines and rectangular forms. Furthermore, their formal vocabulary was limited to the primary colours, red, yellow, and blue, and the three primary values, black, white, and grey. The works avoided symmetry and attained aesthetic balance by the use of opposition. This element of the movement embodies the second meaning of *stijl*: *De Stijl* was influenced by Cubist painting as well as by the mysticism and the ideas about "ideal" geometric forms such as the "perfect straight line" in the neoplatonic philosophy of mathematician M. The works of *De Stijl* would influence the Bauhaus style and the international style of architecture as well as clothing and interior design. In music, *De Stijl* was an influence only on the work of composer Jakob van Domselaer, a close friend of Mondrian. This minimalistic—and, at the time, revolutionary—music defined "horizontal" and "vertical" musical elements and aimed at balancing those two principles. Van Domselaer was relatively unknown in his lifetime, and did not play a significant role within the *De Stijl* group. Theo Skolnik More information.

Chapter 9 : Neo-plasticism – Art Term | Tate

Mondrian sets forth the delimitations of Neoplasticism in his essay "Neo-Plasticism in Pictorial Art". He writes, "this new plastic idea will ignore the particulars of appearance, that is to say, natural form and colour.

That is, it must also be the direct expression of the universal in us – which is the exact appearance of the universal outside us. The universal thus understood is that which is and remains constant: Our whole being is as much the one as the other: This action contains all the misery and all the happiness of life: The immutable is beyond all misery and all happiness: Through the immutable in us, we are united with all things; the mutable destroys our equilibrium, limits us, and separates us from all that is other than us. It is from this equilibrium, from the unconscious, from the immutable that art comes. It attains its plastic expression through the conscious. In this way, the appearance of art is plastic expression of the unconscious and of the conscious. It shows the relationship of each to the other: Thus art tended toward equilibrated plastic. Disequilibrium between individual and universal creates the tragic and is expressed as tragic plastic. In whatever exists as form or corporeality, the natural dominates: The tragic in life leads to artistic creation: The more the tragic diminishes, the more art gains in purity. The new spirit can manifest itself only in the midst of the tragic. It finds only the old form, for the new plastic is yet to be created. Born in the environment of the past, it can be expressed only in the vital reality of the abstract. Because it is part of the whole, the new spirit cannot free itself entirely from the tragic. The New Plastic, expressing the vital reality of the abstract, has not entirely freed itself from the tragic but it has ceased to be dominated by it. In contrast, in the old plastic the tragic dominates. It cannot dispense with the tragic and tragic plastic. So long as the individual dominates, tragic plastic is necessary, for that is what creates its emotion. But as soon as a period of greater maturity is reached, tragic plastic becomes insupportable. For let us not forget that we are at a turning point of culture, at the end of everything ancient: Whether it is recognized or not, one can logically foresee that the future will no longer understand tragic plastic, just like an adult who cannot understand the soul of the child. At the same time as it suppresses the dominating tragic, the new spirit suppresses description in art. Because the obstacle of form has been destroyed, the new art affirms itself as pure plastic. The new spirit has found its plastic expression. In its maturity, the one and the other are neutralized, and they are coupled into unity. Confusion in the apparent unity of interior and exterior has been resolved into an equivalent duality forming absolute unity. The individual and the universal are in more equilibrated opposition. Because they are merged in unity, description becomes superfluous: They are plastically expressed without use of form: It is in painting that the New Plastic achieved complete expression for the first time. This plastic could be formulated because its principle was solidly established, and it continues to perfect itself unceasingly. Neo-Plasticism has its roots in Cubism. It can equally be called Abstract-Real painting because the abstract just like the mathematical sciences but without attaining the absolute, as they do can be expressed by plastic reality. In fact, this is the essential characteristic of the New Plastic in painting. It is a composition of rectangular color planes that expresses the most profound reality-It achieves this by plastic expression of relationships and not by natural appearance. The New Plastic brings its relationships into aesthetic equilibrium and thereby expresses the new harmony. The future of the New Plastic and its true realization in painting is chromoplastic in architecture – It governs the interior as well as the exterior of the building and includes everything that plastically expresses relationships through color. It unites the objective character of decorative art but much more strongly with the subjective character of pictorial art but much more profoundly. At this moment for material and technical reasons, it is very difficult to foresee its exact image! At present each art strives to express itself more directly through its plastic means and seeks to free its means as much as possible. Music tends toward the liberation of sound, literature toward the liberation of word. Thus, by purifying their plastic means, they achieve the pure plastic of relationships. The degree and mode of purification vary with the art and the epoch in which they can be attained. In fact, the new spirit is revealed by the plastic means: Composition must express equilibrated plastic as a function of the individual and of the universal. Dominating tragic must be abolished by composition and plastic means together: Because sculpture and painting have been able to reduce their primitive plastic means

to universal plastic means, they can find effective plastic expression in exactness and in the abstract. Architecture by its very nature already has at its disposal a plastic means free of the capricious form of natural appearance. In the New Plastic, painting no longer expresses itself through the corporeality of appearance that gives it a naturalistic expression. To the contrary, painting is expressed plastically by plane within plane. By reducing three-dimensional corporeality to a single plane, it expresses pure relationship. That there are differences between the arts is no reason that one should be valued less than the other; that can lead to another appearance but not to an opposed appearance. As soon as one art becomes plastic expression of the abstract the others can no longer remain plastic expressions of the natural. The New Plastic abolishes this antagonism: The new sculpture and architecture must destroy the work of art as an object or thing. Each art possesses its own specific expression, its particular nature. Each art discovers these possibilities within its own domain and must remain limited by its bounds. Each art possesses its own means of expression: Therefore the potentialities of one art cannot be judged according to the potentialities of another, but must be considered independently and only with regard to the art concerned. This new beauty has become indispensable to the new man, for in it he expresses his own image in equivalent opposition with nature.