

The background features a grid of thick black lines. The top horizontal bar is red, the bottom horizontal bar is yellow, and a vertical bar on the left is blue. There are also grey rectangular blocks in the top-left, top-right, and bottom-right corners.

# DE STIJL

(Neoplasticism)

# DE STIJL

- Started in **Amsterdam** in **1917** with the publishing of '**De Stijl**' magazine.
- **Piet Mondrian** and **Theo van Doesburg** founding members.
- Advocated **pure abstraction and simplicity** - form reduced to the rectangle ( and other geometric shapes) and **colour to the primary colours, along with black and white.**

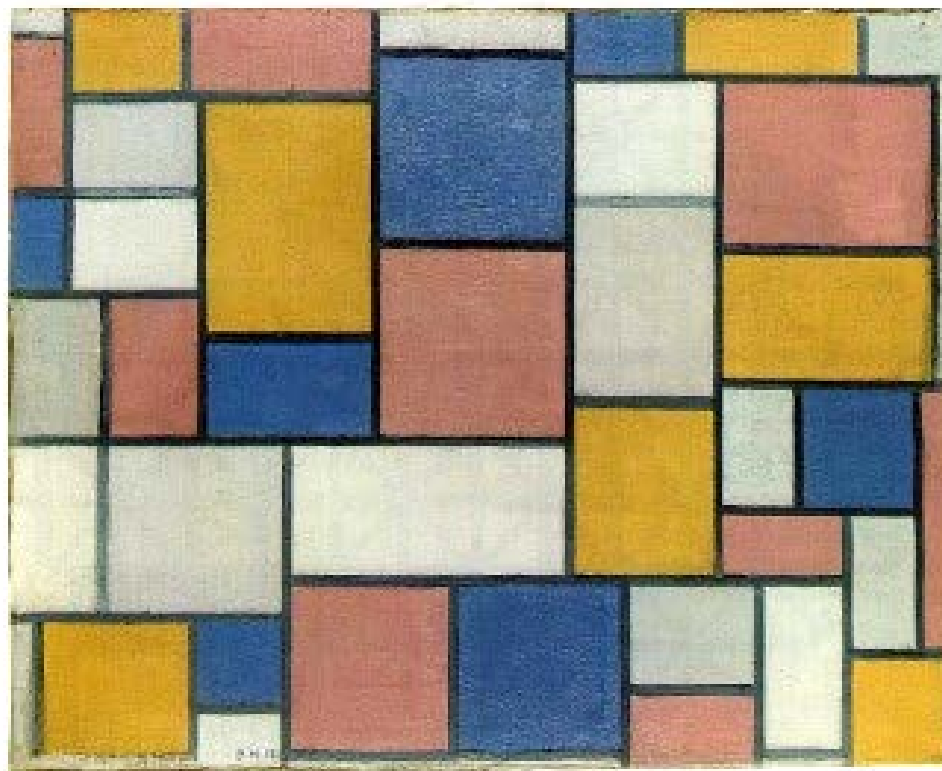
## Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

- Early works were calm landscapes, but in **1908** started to experiment with bright colours.
- Moved to **Paris in 1911** - adopted a **cubist-influenced analytical style**.
- **1917** founded '**De Stijl**' magazine - developed theories of new art form - **neoplasticism**.

## Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

- Maintained that **art should not concern itself with reproducing images of real objects, but should express only the universal absolutes that underlie reality.**
- In the early 1900s many artists tried various abstract ways of representing reality. Mondrian went beyond them. In his compositions he avoided any suggestion of reproducing the material world. Instead using horizontal and vertical black lines that outline blocks of pure white, red, blue or yellow, he expressed his conception of ultimate harmony and equilibrium.

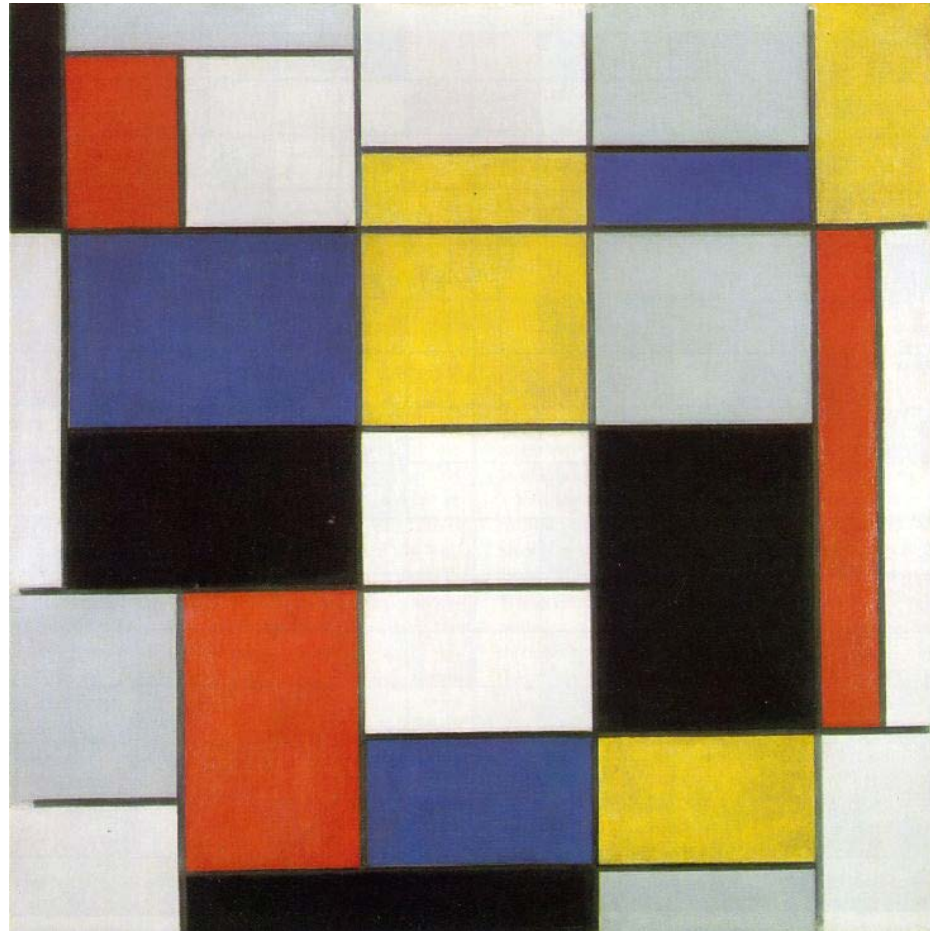
# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)



*Composition with Colour Planes and Grey Lines. 1918*

# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

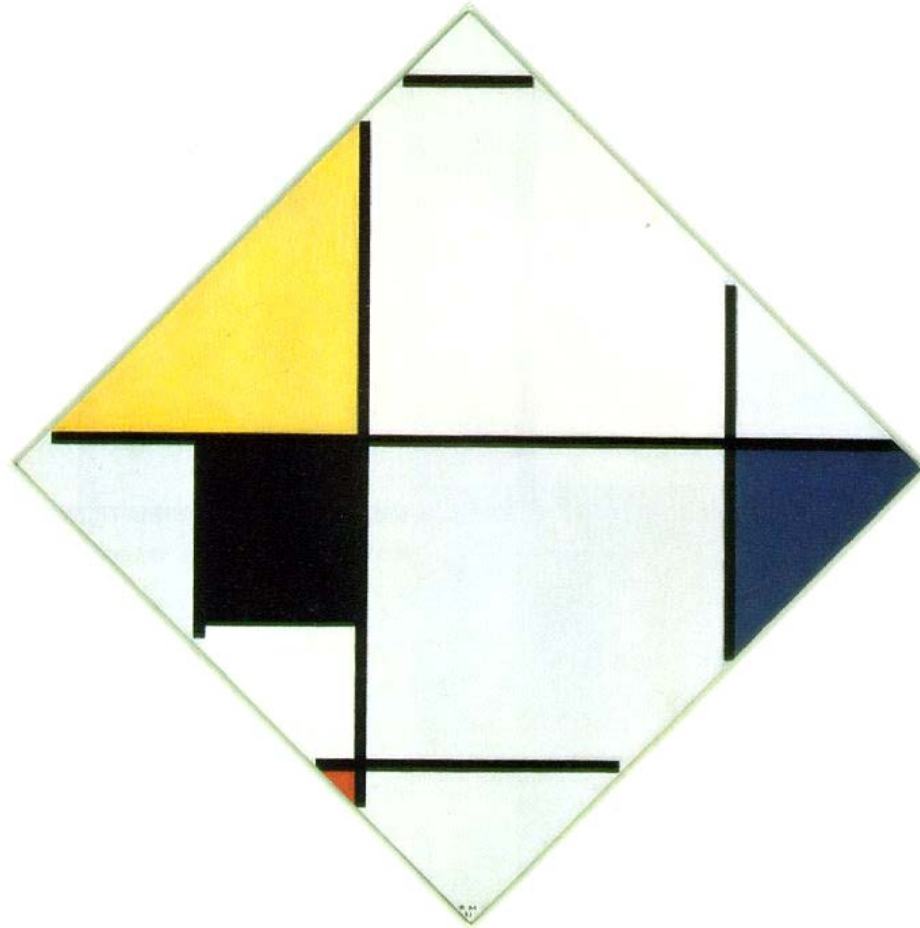
He rejected all sensuous qualities of texture, surface, and colour, reducing his palette to flat primary colours.



*Composition with Black, Red, Grey, Yellow and Blue. 1920*

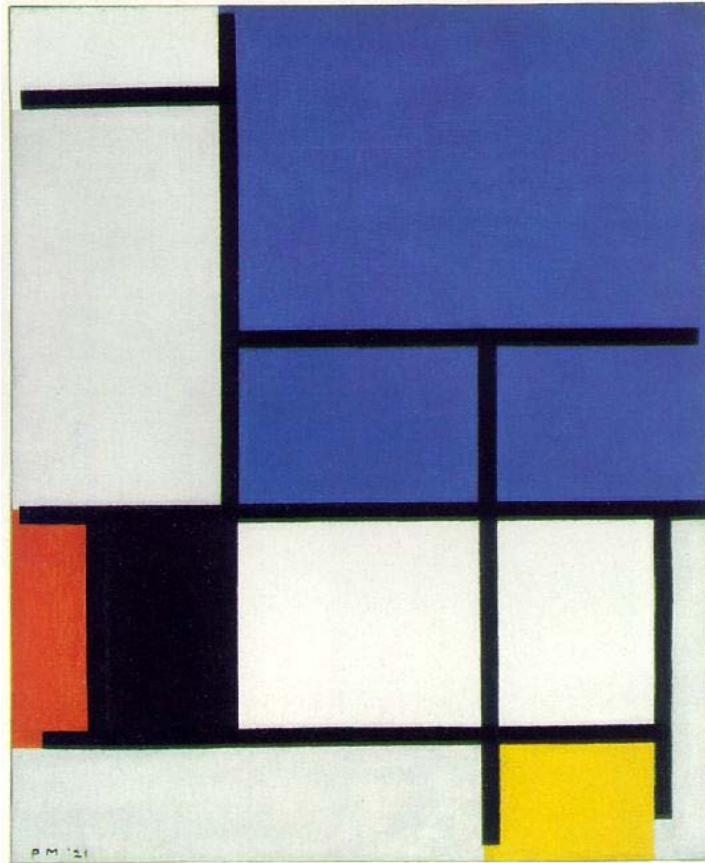
# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

His belief that a canvas a plane surface should contain only planar elements led to his abolition of all curved lines in favour of straight lines and right angles.



*Lozenge Composition with Yellow, Blue, Red, Black and Grey. 1921*

# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

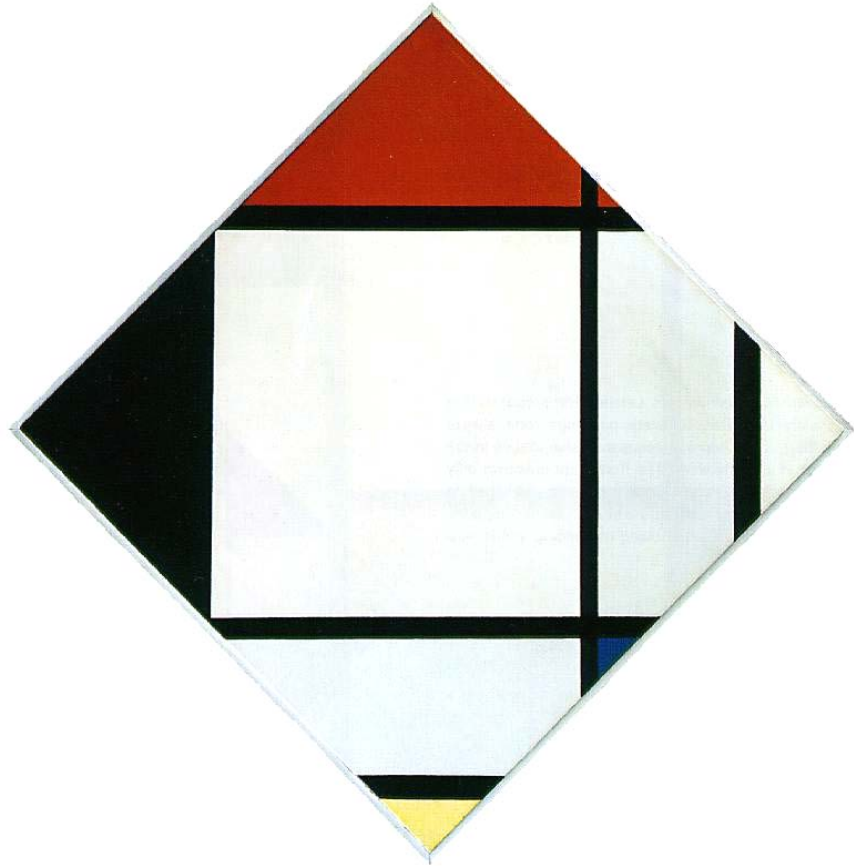


*Composition with Large Blue Plane, Red, Black, Yellow and Grey. 1922*



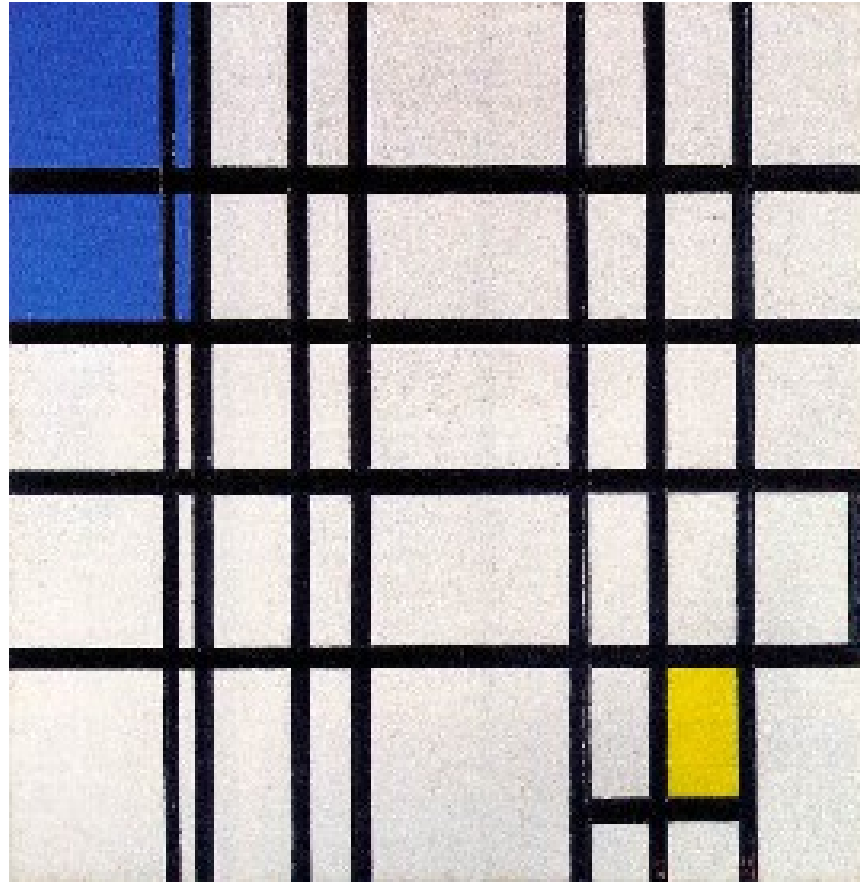
# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

His masterly application of these theories led to such works as *Composition with Red, Black, Blue and Yellow* in which the painting, composed solely of a few black lines and well-balanced blocks of colour, creates a monumental effect out of all proportion to its carefully limited means.



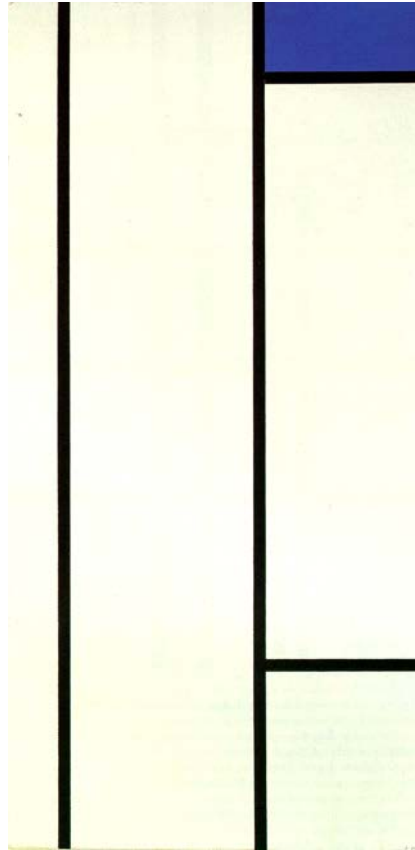
*Lozenge Composition Red, Black, Blue and Yellow. 1925*

# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)



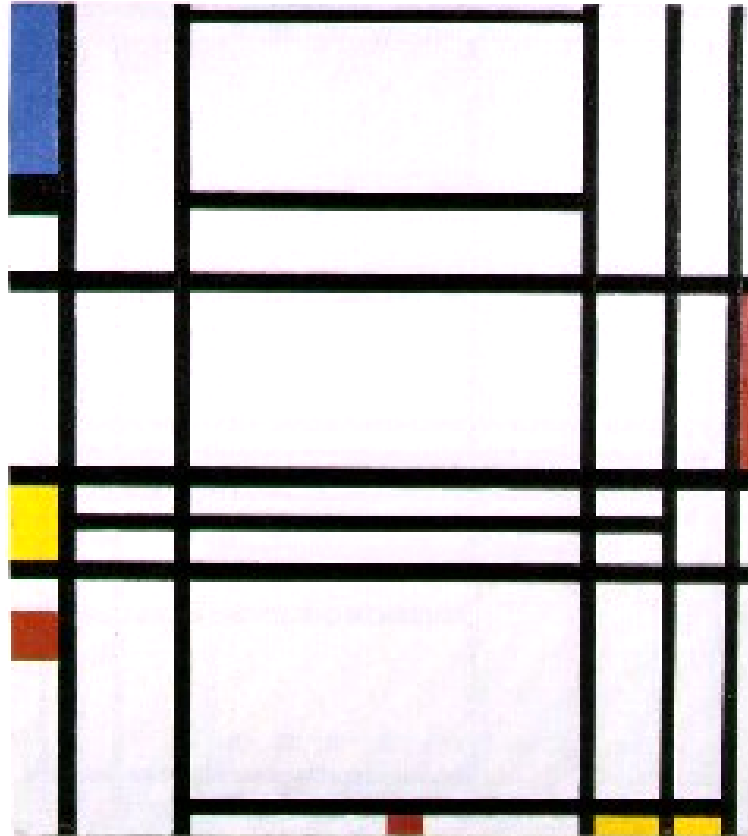
*Rhythm of Black Lines. 1935-42*

**Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)**



*Vertical Composition with Blue and White. 1936*

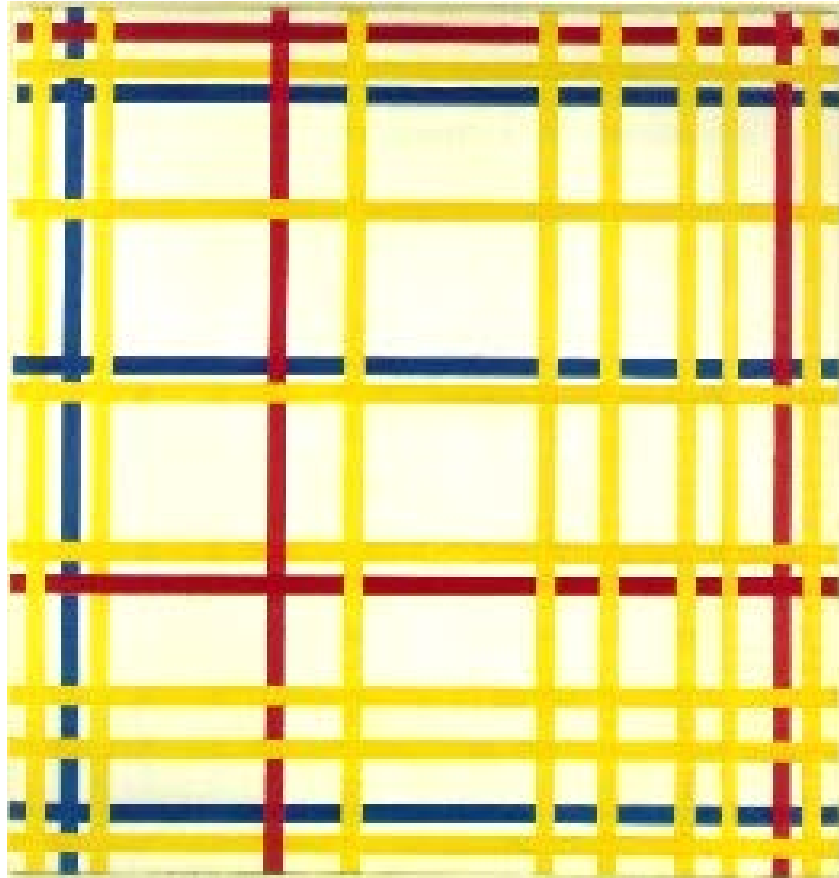
# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)



*Composition No. 10. 1939-42*

# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

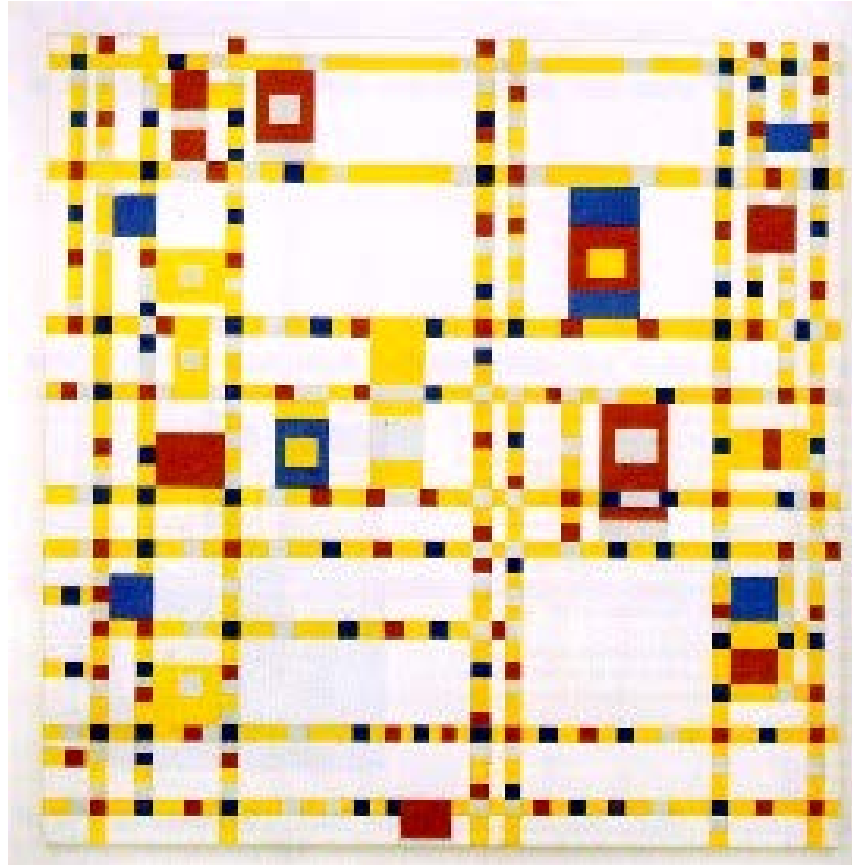
When Mondrian moved to New York City in 1940, his style became freer and more rhythmic, and he abandoned severe black lines in favour of lively chain-link patterns of bright colours.



*New York City 1941-42*

# Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

Particularly notable in this style is his last complete masterwork, *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (1943, Museum of Modern Art, New York City). His final painting, called 'Victory Boogie Woogie', was still unfinished when he died in New York City on February 1, 1944.



*Broadway Boogie Woogie* 1942-43

## Piet Mondrian (1872-1944)

Mondrian was one of the most influential 20th-century artists. His theories of abstraction and simplification not only altered the course of painting but also exerted a profound influence on architecture, industrial design, and the graphic arts.

Mondrian died in New York on Feb. 1, 1944.

# Theo van Doesburg (1883-1931)



He was one of the founders (1917) of De Stijl magazine, which promoted the neoplastic ideals of radical simplification based on the use of straight lines, right angles, and flat planes. Through speeches and articles, Doesburg spread neoplastic ideas to the BAUHAUS school, where they influenced the course of mid-century architecture and design.

*Design for University Hall 1923*



# Bart van der Leck (1876-1968)

This is an example of the style of work of another De Stijl artist, Bart van der Leck. It is a colour lithograph with typography and we can see the obvious neoplastic minimalist forms. This style had a major influence on one of the most famous of the De Stijl group members.



*Horseman 1919*

# Bart van der Leck (1876-1968)



*Shopping Bag 1935*

## Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The architect who best realised the ideals of De Stijl was Rietveld, one of the C20th's greatest creators. Gerrit Rietveld was trained as a cabinetmaker and jeweller. In 1917-18, he worked out the prototype for a revolutionary piece of furniture made out of painted wood, the *Red and Blue Chair*.

## Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

Its surprising look – which may seem somewhat off-putting at first – suggests a wood and board ‘construction’ more than it does a comfortable chair. The planes painted in bright colours and black supports are screwed and glued together so as to emphasise the chair’s structural characteristics. For the first time, the component parts of a chair could be visually enumerated one by one, just as all the elements in Mondrian’s paintings could. The seventeen parts are arranged horizontally, vertically, and diagonally.



*Red and Blue Chair 1917-18*  
painted beech and plywood, steel

## Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The oblique planes are painted red and blue, the supporting structure black, and the accent panels yellow. With this functional decomposition and the visible assembly of the parts, Rietveld reduced the chair to its fundamental structure for the first time. The chair is a powerful statement of Neoplastic design. In the years that followed, the system it is based on, guided Rietveld in his work.



*Red and Blue Chair 1917-18*  
painted beech and plywood, steel

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)



In this piece Rietveld achieves the De Stijl edict of "weightlessness" by the masterful use of open spaces and by highlighting the listel ends with white. The form appears to float; space seems to continue through it rather than being blocked by its presence. Its strong horizontal emphasis, symmetry and rectilinear nature echo Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School architecture.

*Sideboard 1919*  
Ash wood and paint

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

This chair is made of silver painted beechwood and again gives the feeling of lightness, though the appearance is quite austere.



*"Hogestoel"* High Back Chair, 1919  
Beechwood painted white and blue

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

We can see the obvious Rietveld style of rectilinear planes, even in such pieces as this 1920 hanging lighting fixture of glass bulbs with oak bases.



*Hanging Lighting Fixture 1920*



# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

Note the play of intersecting planes, that characterised Rietveld's work. This piece is remarkable if only for its asymmetrical, yet balanced composition and the orthogonal assembly of its eight component parts – white grey and black planes and bars – each of which is different from the others. The chair has the look of a sculptural construction and is the translation of the pictorial investigations of Neoplasticism into three dimensional space.



Berlin chair 1923  
painted mahogany plywood and linden ash

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The same can be said for this side table, which was exhibited for the first time, along with the Berlin Chair, at the Greater Berlin Art Exhibition of 1923.



*End Table 1923*

beechwood with parts lacquered in black and white, with primary colours red, yellow and blue.

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

Rietveld applied the principles of analysis used to create the Red and Blue chair to architecture in 1924 when he received the commission for Mrs. Schroeder's house. The two storey construction covered by a flat roof, is open on three sides. With the planes and bars that make up the façades, the white and grey walls, the polychrome accents, and the apparently dislocated volume, the building has a very modern look.



*Schroeder House 1925*

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The system of construction is visible and there is no symmetry. Each side of the building is made up of planes and metal beams in an orthogonal arrangement. The sides are put together in a way that emphasises the dynamics of the volumes – the use of roof overhangs, recesses (sometimes for a door or a window), and balconies (which sometimes also function as canopies).



*Schroeder House 1925*

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The Schroeder House was the only edifice that was constructed entirely according to the De Stijl principles, where all of the houses parts are broken down into their component elements, thus making the structure of the building clearly visible.



*Schroeder House 1925*

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

The impression created by the exterior of the house is confirmed on the inside. The polychromy of the walls and floor strengthens or transforms certain architectural features. The large windows bring the surrounding landscape into the house and we see the first utilisation of the 'free floor plan', advocated by so many contemporary architects.

The Schroeder House was the expression of a new type of architecture that destroyed traditional notions of volume and space.



*Schroeder House 1925*

# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

This is a lamp that was designed for the Schroeder House, again adding to the unity.



*Lamp for Schroeder House*

## Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

This remarkably stark design consists of only four rectangular sections. The seat and back of natural oak have been dovetailed together, and the seat and base reinforced with two triangular wedges. The brass nuts and bolts holding these wedges together represent one of the few times in De Stijl design where the hardware became part of the overall decoration. This system of joining belies the complex construction of the piece: the nuts and bolts must pass through each of the panels to produce the necessary strength for the cantilevered structure.



*Zig Zag Sidechair 1934*



# Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964)

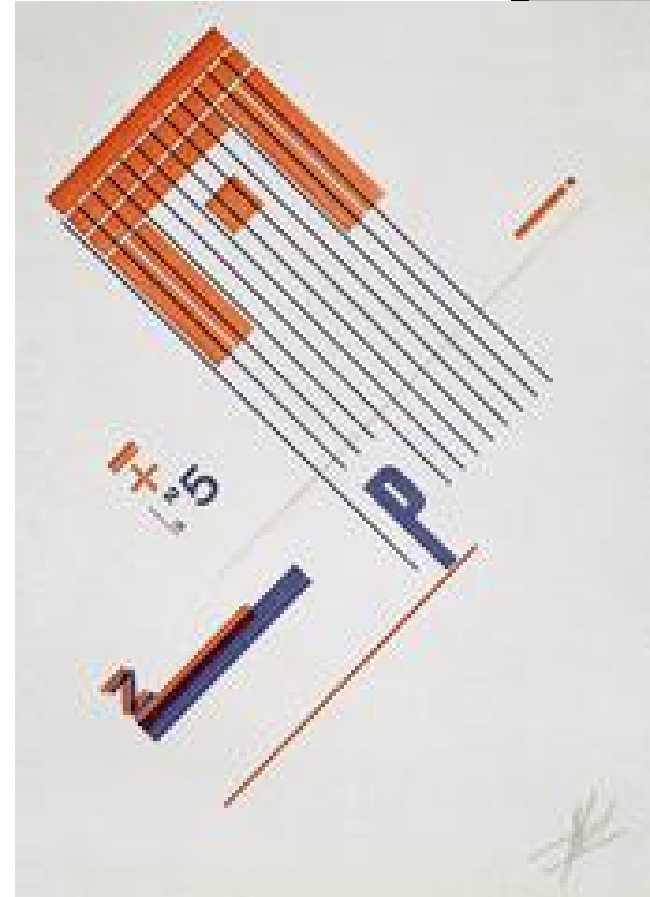
This is a later piece by Rietveld made of birch-faced moulded plywood and chromium-plated steel glides.



*Danish Chair 1949-50*

# Piet Zwart (1885-1977)

Trained as an architect, Piet Zwart described himself as a typotekt but also worked as an interior and furniture designer and as an architectural critic. He designed advertisements and logotypes drawn in geometric lettering for various firms. Over the next ten years, in nearly 300 advertisements, Zwart moved from pure typography to combining photographs and photomontages with type. He used type, ornaments, and rules in a free, playful composition with words running up, down, across, and diagonally over the page.



*Homage to a Young Girl 1925*

# Piet Zwart (1885-1977)

Using the letters ITF as a starting point, Zwart designed a graphic house style for all the exhibition publicity for an experimental theatre association that screened avant-garde films.

In this collage-like composition he combined a film strip image along with a set of penetrating eyes, a viewer staring intently through the film strip. His use of an arresting (if not unsettling) visual combined with typographic shorthand (particularly the oversized imprint of ITF) leaves an afterimage, an indelible mark in one's conscious memory.



*Lithograph 1928*

# Piet Zwart (1885-1977)

Zwart also designed furniture, and here we can see the obvious De Stijl elements. The chair is made of wood with metal clasp strengtheners.



*Chair 1935*

# Unknown Artist

Stripped of all unnecessary decorative elements, or any desire to "beautify," this poster is forthright in its primary function: factual communication. Although the designer of this poster remains unknown, it serves as a fine example of the principal graphic ingredients identified with the De Stijl movement: a formal, rectilinear composition with the familiar De Stijl letterforms.



*Moderne Kunst 1925*

# Hendrikus Theodorus Wijdeveld (1885-1987)

Wijdeveld generally used simplified forms, yet in a decorative if blocky, architectonic fashion. He was concerned more with form than function. He designed posters, alphabets, and book covers, adapting his typography to a wide range of decorative styles and combining drawn lettering that contrasted with highly constructed typecases. Lettering designed from lines and blocks shortly became his trademark.

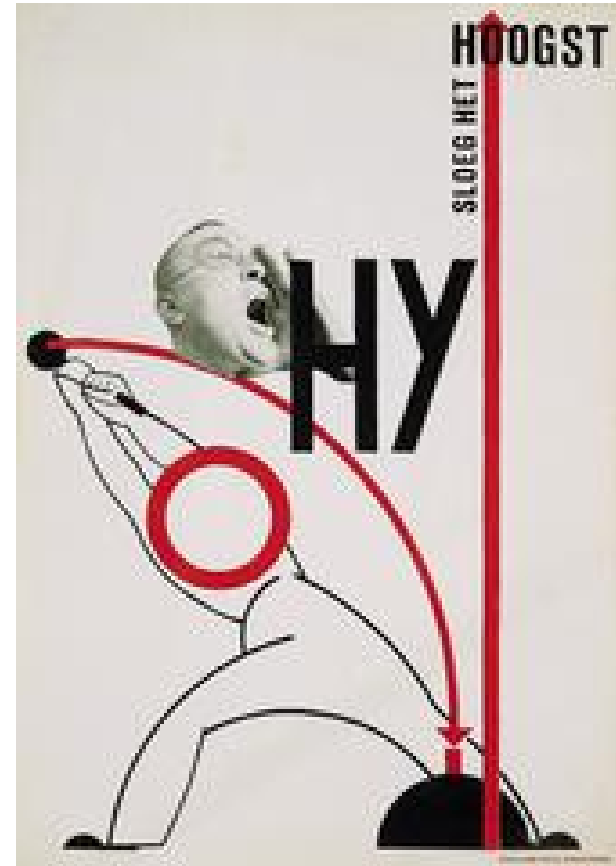


*Economisch-Historisch 1929*

# Paul Schuitema (1897-1929)

Schuitema developed an edgy form of layout that introduced many new innovations: the photocollage, photomontage, and cinematic picture narratives with shifting perspectives. The aim was to "use the minimum means for maximum effect."

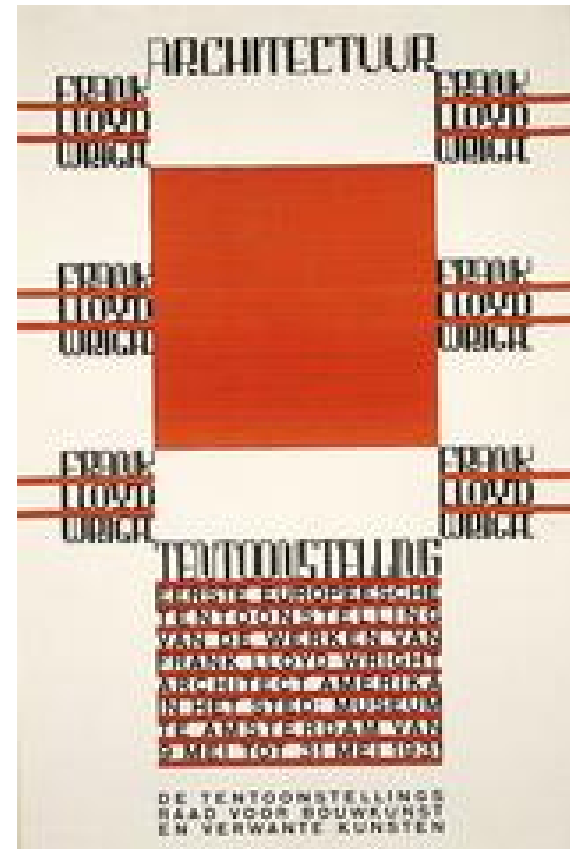
Most of Schuitema's typographic compositions are quite austere, showing a preference for sans serif type and cut-out photographic forms contrasting sharply against red tinted areas. The photomontage became a familiar component of modern graphic design throughout the 1930s.



*Advertising leaflet 1929*

# Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1956)

Frank Lloyd Wright and Hendrikus Wijdeveld designed this poster for Wright's 1931 exhibition in Amsterdam, a major architectural show that toured the United States and Europe from 1930 to 1931. The image's simple, geometric design and typography recall works by both the Dutch De Stijl and the German Bauhaus.



*Architectuur lithograph 1931*



## J. J. P. Oud (1890-1963)



Advocating simplicity, purity, and rationality, Oud produced sober designs characterised by flat horizontal facades, wraparound corners, and crisply right-angled outlines.

Oud enjoyed designing furnishings for his interiors. This cantilevered piano lamp made of nickel-plated brass, is ingeniously made from only six geometric elements, and is considered one of the finest examples of modern design.

*Piano Lamp 1928*

# J. Kuykens

After the invention of the incandescent bulb at the turn of the century, lighting became increasingly scientific and lamps more abstract in form. Some designers, like J. Kuykens, even became known as "illuminating engineers." This floor lamp, which stands at about 2 metres in height and made of glass with chromed tubing, provides ambient lighting instead of a directed beam, and echoes the layered horizontal designs of such modern architects as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe.



*Floor Lamp 1930*

# Theodore Hooft (1918-1965)

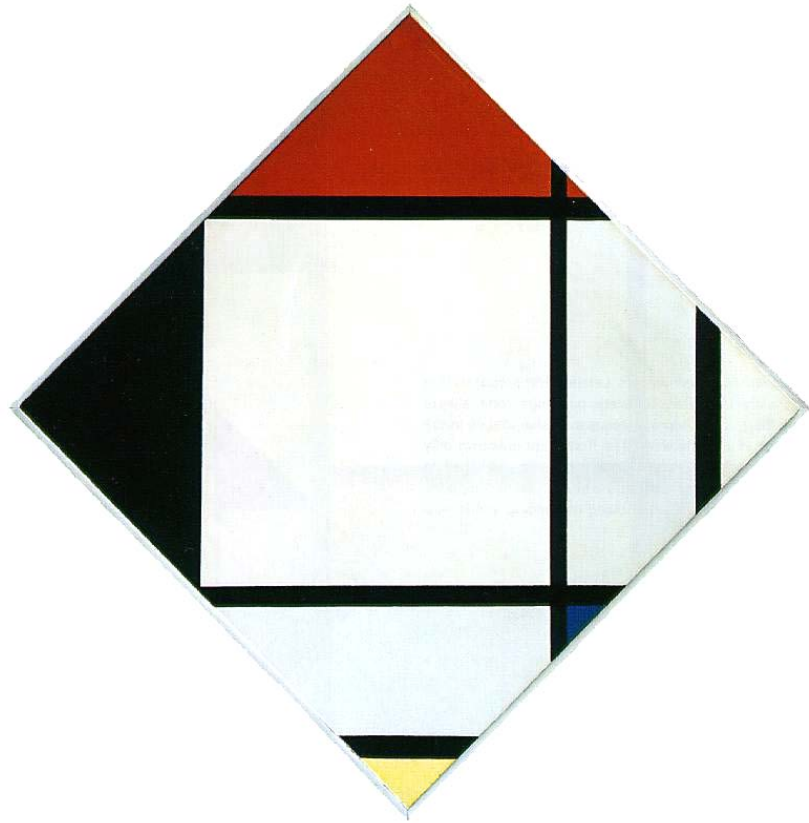


This 1930 pewter tea set has no ornamentation and was relatively inexpensive to produce because it presented few technical challenges. At the time, the global economy was in decline, and the works' unadorned finishes and squared-off handles offered stylistic purity on a modest budget.

*Teapot with Creamer and Covered Sugar Bowl 1930*

# Finally...

The influence of Mondrian, Neoplastic theory, and the ideas of De Stijl spread to all corners of the Western world and have left an indelible mark on contemporary architecture and design.





**THE END**