

Lecture Notes

Syllabus 2/09– CUBOFUTURISM, SUPREMATISM AND RAYONISM

SUPREMATISM:

Suprematism – expressed FEELING (as in pure, universal feeling, not specific emotions) through totally non-objective abstracted representation.

Malevich one of the few Russian artists who never left Russia. Saw avant garde art thru exhibitions and private collections and studied it. Never went to Paris to submerge himself in the avant garde scene.

Malevich's work was criticized and controversial because of contradictions (he claimed total non-objectivity but some of his stuff had images that seemed to represent objects like the big cross, or his 10 Red Rectangles or his Football Match.)

Malevich was very angry with those critics who didn't get his concept.



- **01_Morning in the Country after the Rain – 1911 - Malevich**
 - 2 peasant women walking in country
 - Similar to Leger's Nudes in the Forest
 - Recalls Cezanne cone,cylinder,sphere, simplifying



- **02_0,10: The Last Futurist Exhibition – 1915 - Malevich**
 - Exhibition Malevich mounted
 - Influenced by Futurism
 - **Titled “The Last Futurist Exhibition” because he has moved through Cubism & Futurism into Supremetism**
 - See Supremetist Composition in corner (see #4 below)
 - Placed in corner because that's where traditional Russian religious icons were placed in homes. This new way of understanding universal pure feeling and communicating it is taking the place of religion in society.
 - Malevich fascinated by airplanes. One of the compositions on the wall has to do with airplanes. He saw

airplanes as the physical manifestation of the inevitability of man's will to fly.



- **03_Supremetist Composition: White on White – 1918 - Malevich**
 - This is a white square on white background
 - Square is filled with white paint, and is pure feeling.
 - Background is the void.



- **04_Black Square – Supremetist Composition – 1919? – Malevich**
 - **First Supremetist work**
 - Black square = loaded full of pure, universal feeling
 - White background = the void (what is left after pure feeling)
 - Malevich wanted to be rid of all “objects” because they were corrupt and devalued in society. In eliminating objects you are left with pure feeling.



- **05_Prounraum (Proun Room) Berlin – 1923 - Lissitzky**
 - Installation he did after being influenced by Constructivism
 - Considered a painting
 - Geometric elements from his Proun composition below come out of the flat, 2-D painting and extend through the room (“real” space), beyond the boundaries of pictorial frames. They are flat painted pieces of wood.
 - The idea of “real space” is where we start stepping into Constructivism



- **06_Proun 99 – 1924 - Lissitsky**
 - Proun = Project for the Reaffirmation of the New
 - Project initiated out of experience with Malevich working with Suprematism taking idea of non-objectivity
 - 2 dimensional painting based on purely non-objective images
 - Meaning = simply the interaction formally of these geometric elements across the surface of the picture; the way the elements come together visually
 - The logical outgrowth of Suprematism

CUBOFUTURISM AND RAYONISM

CuboFuturism – WWI through Bolshevik Revolution under Lenin. Artists drawing on Futurism and Cubism but going beyond Cubism to add ideology of promoting Russia's modernity in the face of the rest of Europe. Will grow into Constructivism.

During this time there was an amazing outpouring of avant garde artistic free expression and experimentation. Lenin, curiously, didn't stop it (even tho he despised it). Who knows why???



- **07_Subject from a Dyer's Shop– 1914 - Popova**
 - In Russia, under Communism, women had more significant roles as leaders in art and culture than in Germany and France. Golden age for women.
 - Studied in Paris with a leading Cubist, Metzinger
 - Leading CuboFuturist involved with Jack of Diamonds and Donkey's Tail
 - Stylistically it's an analytic cubist still life, with color, and the appearance of collage with Russian lettering BUT ITS TRUE SIGNIFICANCE IS that it's done by woman in this period and is indicative of the avant garde experimentation of Russian cubofuturism: influenced by the ideology of futurism and the visual possibilities of cubism.

- This work also reflects the influence of Lubok prints (block prints by Russian peasants, simple forms and jewel tone colors)



- **08_Linen - 1912 – Goncharova**
 - Earlier Goncharova
 - Absorbed Cubism and reflects it here. Chose domestic subject matter (typical cubist subject matter). Breaking down elements like analytic cubism and added lettering. Contemporary.
 - Cubofuturism

RAYONISM

Grew out of Futurism. Goncharova and Larionov pioneered Rayonism.

Idea of Rayonism:

- to express in paint the intersection of rays of light off the surface of objects.
- To convey something more real than what you could experience in real life.
- They went all the way back to Impressionist ideas about light, and also used math and scientific studies of light rays, optics etc.
- Went further than Impressionists by expressing not only light but the angles light reflected



- **09_Cats - 1912-13 - Goncharova**
 - Idea expressed more effectively in this work than below



- **10_Rayonist Composition – 1916 – Larionov**
 - Less literal, a little more theoretical than “Cats”