



Theo Van Doesburg

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Theo Van Doesburg

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: None

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1883

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Netherlands

YEAR DIED: 1931

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: Switzerland

RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE AFFECTED EITHER THE ARTIST'S LIFE EXPERIENCE OR WORK BECAUSE IT/THEY PROVIDED A CHALLENGE AT THE TIME, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Theo Doesburg studied the religion of Theosophy. That is the, "maintaining that a knowledge of God may be achieved through spiritual ecstasy, direct intuition, or special individual relations". Which I believe is why he was searching for the same harmony as Peit Mondrian.

DID THIS DESIGNER DO NOTABLE WORK IN FIELDS OTHER THAN WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED GRAPHIC DESIGN TODAY? EXPLAIN.

Painter, a founder of De Stijl, lecturer, architect, and served in the Dutch Military during WWII

LIST AT LEAST ONE OTHER WORK THAT IS NOT NAMED IN THIS TIMELINE FOR WHICH THIS DESIGNER IS WELL KNOWN. IF WORK CO-CREATED, LIST THE OTHERS INVOLVED.

Dancer is a piece he painted in 1916 was actually one of the first paintings that he did from the beginning of his journey into the study of Theosophy. This really had no effect on the overall population but definitely a look into the future of his studies into abstraction of color and figures.

EXPLAIN IF THIS FAME IS ONLY WITHIN DESIGN CIRCLES OR ANY OTHER SUBSET OF THE POPULATION.

This fame would've been acknowledged by graphic artists along with painters. It can be viewed as taking inspiration directly from cubism.

DOES THIS WORK EXEMPLIFY ASPECTS EXPLAINED IN PREVIOUS QUESTIONS?

Explain here and remove this explanation text.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

Doesburg can be most noted for his paintings, study of color, and asymmetrical balance.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

There is nothing notably controversial about this designer.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE MOST OFTEN USED BY THIS DESIGNER IN THE CREATION AND PRODUCTION OF WORK?

Oil on canvas, some stained glass, and pencil work.

EXPLAIN THIS DESIGNER'S EDUCATION/TRAINING, INCLUDING ACADEMIC, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND /OR MENTORSHIPS.

he was forced to serve the Dutch military for a couple years during WWI, then studied acting and training to sing until he found his love for painting. To keep his painting career going, he would write for magazines.

DID THIS DESIGNER PROMOTE A SPECIFIC IDEOLOGY IN HIS/HER WORK? EXPLAIN.

From his later works and posters that he designed during De Stijl you can see he went into full modernism. Using an asymmetrical balance that was unlike any other type of modernist work.

WHY IS THIS DESIGNER VIEWED AS ICONIC IN THE HISTORY OF GRAPHIC DESIGN?

The main view for Van Doesburg being iconic was the fact that he was a pioneer of the De Stijl movement that changed a lot for graphic design and modernism. Many of the colors and typography stayed the same but the overall layout changed drastically. The inspiration came from Dada, then mixed it with modernism to be very clean but also asymmetrical and balanced.

IS THERE ANY OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT THIS DESIGNER?

He was declined a position in the, "Bauhaus leaders considered his idea too dogmatic and narrow." his ideas being more radical version of De Stijl. He still continued to teach close by the building to those who were interested in his views. Doesburg spoke poorly upon the teaching of the Bauhaus arguing in favour of objectivity and impersonality.

YOUR NAME: Cody Crittenden

GIVE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS DESIGNER AND HIS/HER WORK. ALSO EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE, IF ANY, THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN. A LACK OF INFLUENCE MUST BE EXPLAINED.

Obviously not knowing Theo Van Doesburg until having art history classes, I never realized the impact that he had on graphic design and the arts. I've always had a good sense of spacial awareness on a page, but never liked to see extremely symmetrical works of art. Other than mandalas or another type of symmetrical art.

Until recently I've never thought of the term asymmetrical balance for works of art, mainly just thought of it for magazines or cover art. Before De Stijl and asymmetrical art, everything was symmetrical. Artist are meant to poke and push at different ways of thinking. I respect Doesburg for pushing the idea of being able to fit different pieces on a page with no symmetry and still make sense.

Though the composition doesn't look as pleasing as other works of art, I respect the thought process and combination's of different ideas that could be formed into one to create a unique look for advertising. Advertisements like posters for movies, or old Russian propaganda, are some of my favorite kinds of art work. Which is why I went with graphic design as my major in college. Even

though I'm not really interested in his work or think it is very pleasing to the eye, the layout that is represented is well balanced and a big influence in my work. A lot of things I've created in my life is usually asymmetrical but balanced at the same time.

Really anything you see now-a-days on billboards or magazines, with images and words are never completely symmetrical. This influence for graphic design in my opinion is one the highest tier for inspiration. Without Van Doesburgs' movement, who knows what our advertisements would look like today. I know most movements come from generations of other styles before them just like De Stijl took inspiration from the Dada movement and modernism. There always has to be that person or group of individuals who get the ball rolling. People who are influencer's on the community.

From Van Doesburgs early works there is influence found in Vincent Van Gogh's paintings of the then more modernist figurative style. Not saying they are bad paintings but I think he was just enjoying painting as he seen the world around him. Theo Doesburg wrote in magazines to be able to paint on his own with no restrictions.

He could've just worked his nine to five and picked up his paycheck, but instead spent his extra time and money to create works of art that he enjoyed. I find this to be inspirational and should be for other artist. The man didn't want to stop doing what he loved even though it was not really getting him anywhere at the time being . Then eventually finding a way to make a career out of it. He found something like Theosophy, a religion, and using that as inspiration to change his style.

People can find just about anything to turn into art however they see fit. I am a firm believer in events happening for a reason. Without this belief he decided to study, he could have still just been writing his articles and painting on the side pulling inspiration from Van Gogh.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Meggs, Phillip B. and Alston W. Purvis. *Meggs' History of Graphic Design, 5th Edition*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012.
"Theo Van Doesburg Biography, Art, and Analysis of Works." The Art Story. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://www.theartstory.org/artist-van-doesburg-theo.htm>.

