



## El Lissitzky

**Designer's full name:** Elazar Markovich Lissitzky

**Designer's pseudonym/nickname:** El Lissitzky

**Gender:** Male

**Year Born:** 1890

**Country Born:** Russia

**Year Died:** 1941

**Country Died:** Russia

**Religion | Political Alignment:** Made a lot of propaganda and worked on USSR magazines, so one can assume that Lissitzky was pro USSR.

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**How did any of the above affect either his/her life experience or work because it/they provided a challenge at the time?**

His religion, Judaism, affected his work. It's what allowed him to get into book design. Also, he wasn't happy with Vitebsk, so that caused him to move around a lot. This caused him to gain more knowledge and connections abroad that influenced his style (i.e. Constructivism). Because he moved around so much he trained in things like architecture and engineering.

**Did this designer do notable work in fields other than what would TODAY be considered graphic design?**

Painting and architecture. Due to these fields, Lissitzky came up with "PROUNS" which is a series he is well known for.

**For what is this designer most noted in relation to design? EXPLAIN.**

His knowledge of structural design, typography and painting. It is his style of paintings that gained a lot of traction, known as PROUNS.

**Is there anything controversial about this designer? Explain.**

There is nothing notably controversial about this designer.

**Explain this designer's education/training, including academic, apprenticeships, and /or mentorships.**

He initially trained in Vitebsk. Then, he went to Technische Hochschule in Darmstadt and was trained in architecture by Joseph Olbrich. Afterward, he studied at Riga Polytechnical Institute and majored in engineering and architecture. He worked as a draftsman, and then was made a professor in architecture and graphic design by Chagall.

**Did this designer promote a specific ideology in his/her work? Explain.**

He promoted Suprematism, which is the idea that there is supremacy of "pure emotion" in art. A lot of his work showed this ideology and also led to his reputation as a nonrepresentational artist, due to his commitment of showing pure emotion.

**Why is this designer viewed as iconic in the history of graphic design?**

His achievements in typography, drawing, advertising, and painting were impressive in the art world, and was a pioneer in many subjects, most notably in nonrepresentational art.

**Is there any other important information to know about this designer?**

He spent time at Bauhaus which allowed his ideologies and style to spread.

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**Student:** Terah Grimes

**State and explain the one most important effect that your assigned artist and the quality/importance of his/her work had on the history of graphic design.**

El Lissitzky is an influential 20th-century artist and graphic designer. El Lissitzky was born in 1890 and died in Russia. He received training in Vitebsk, left for Germany, studied abroad in France, Italy, and Belgium, but then settled back in Russia. He wasn't happy with Vitebsk, so that caused him to move around a lot. This caused him to gain more knowledge and connections abroad. El Lissitzky was an influential artist in the canon of graphic design due to his constructivist style and his role in the education of artists. His study and education caused a lot of influence in his style.

El Lissitzky's study and travel influenced his style and mediums, which is a large part of his influence. Lissitzky's education caused him to focus on things that interested him, and he took a very passionate interest in different mediums. He attended the Technische Hochschule in Darmstadt, Polytechnic Institute of Riga, and worked for firms. He got into book design due to his interest in Jewish culture during this work, and his work with illustrating Yiddish books was his first breakthrough into book design, which was a field that he dominated during his life. Lissitzky's travel to places like France, Italy, and Belgium caused his influence to grow due to his skills maturing. The styles local to these countries allowed Lissitzky to gain a lot of influence on his own style and what he was passionate about. For example, the architectural techniques from France and Italy allowed his career to progress. Due to his educational background and travel, his work was recognized and allowed him to teach.

Lissitzky's time as an educator allowed his career to flourish. He was a professor in architecture and graphic design, most noted for his knowledge of structural design and typography as well as his work with Constructivism. This influenced his students and allowed him to form an association with them. During his

time as a professor, he produced his most notable work, the PROUN paintings. These pieces are widely talked about in the art world, such as works like 2C. These paintings were representative of "for the new art" and it was impressive due to his approach to space. Proun shows Lissitzky's promotion of Constructivism, which is a large part of his legacy, as well as the most specific style shown in his work.

Lissitzky's use of Constructivism in his work is an influential contributor to the formation of his career and influence. Constructivism originated in Russia and was an influential art period that flourished there. Constructivism is clearly shown in his PROUN work, which is extremely nonrepresentational, and his use of the style caused a mass association of students to follow it. The nonrepresentational nature of his Constructivist art is a notable part of his career. The style promoted both "dynamism and subtlety" and often was a symbol of utopia. Due to this, his work gained a lot of attention and popularity.

## **Bibliography**

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