



László Moholy-Nagy

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: László Weiz

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: László Moholy-Nagy

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1895

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Hungary

YEAR DIED: 1946

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: United States

RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT: Hungarian | Jewish-Hungarian | Calvinist

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.

Moholy-Nagy grew up studying under literature yet his time as set painter led him down the path of artistic expression and exploration. His Constructivist beliefs is what brought him to Bauhaus and was one of the main leaders in the school's shift to more artistic and industrial design. His experimentations with typography, photography and art led him to be a great influencer who spread his knowledge far and wide despite living in wartime Germany.

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

Moholy-Nagy had led many artist roles such as photographer, filmmaker, typographer, painter, sculptor, writer, graphic designer, stage designer, and teacher.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

Moholy-Nagy was most noted for his contributions as a professor in the Bauhaus and as a founder of the School of Design in Chicago, Illinois. He has also made great strides in experimental photography or "photo-sculptures". It was his works with film and photography that allowed him to be discovered by Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus in 1922. Moholy-Nagy's experiments with light, color, shape, and form all lead him to break the mold of design and bring it new perspective.

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.

Moholy-Nagy initially went to the University of Budapest in 1914 to study law. It was there that he met the poet Endre Ady and became associated with musicians and other poets like him. While recovering from a severe thumb wound, Moholy-Nagy began creating portraits. In 1918, he studied under Fauve artist Robert Bereny. It was here he began to connect with other artists and even collaborated with a few notable names such as Lajos Kassak, Marianne Brandt, Istvan Seboek and many others.

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

He promoted the Constructivist ideology, which is very similar in terms of philosophy to the Arts & Crafts movement that William

Morris pioneered. While he was not officially considered an activist, his agreement with communist ideals of a perfect utopia and the essence of industry and art combined shine in his work.

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

He helped develop what is called the “Bauhaus style” and elevated many artforms with his Constructivist ideology. Moholy-Nagy was also a revered instructor in the metal workshop in Bauhaus and moved on to inspire many youths to embrace their individual creativity.

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

No.

YOUR NAME: Alliyah Kirkwood

STATE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS PERSON AND THE QUALITY/IMPORTANCE OF HIS/HER WORK. EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE - OR LACK OF INFLUENCE - THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN.

One of the most important tasks for any type of artist is to expose oneself to others works and ideas. Moholy-Nagy is no exception. Upon experiencing some of the work he’s done and learning more about his history, it gives me an idea of the places that art has been and where it can go in the future. His work as a designer and a teacher are pivotal to the development of the applied arts craft.

Moholy-Nagy was influenced by several sources, such as Constructivism and De Stijl (Meggs 338). It was these ideas that allowed him to approach design in a way that focused on uniformity and harmony. His works in painting, typography and photography are all examples of this. No matter the material or medium, Moholy-Nagy explored it to its fullest potential. The focus on line, shape and their relationships to create a visual message without emotion was what he achieved. It was because of his works that he was invited to teach at the Bauhaus by Walter Gropius, the founder. Despite the design school’s initial expressionist path, Lazlo Moholy-Nagy helped steer the school towards Constructivism and the machine aesthetic.

When I consider the work that I have done and compare it to Moholy-Nagy, I realize that I have yet to explore how different elements react to one another. I have never considered looking at other graphic designers who specialized in print and media. Yet somehow, seeing the cover and poster designs made me rethink on what constitutes as good graphic design. Seeing important historical art that paved the road to the modernist era of today is enlightening. I can confidently say that before learning and researching about Lazlo Moholy-Nagy, this kind of work did not influence me. However, I do find it ironic that my interest in minimalist type aesthetic came from Moholy-Nagy’s influence and work. With this realization, I can safely say that I am grateful for his work and the ideals that went with it. Observing more of his works would be beneficial to my career as a graphic designer.

His photographic works are intriguing in the way that he was able to create a “photogram” by using transparent objects structured in a way that only the light was captured on the paper as it developed (Newhall 349). It is comparable to my current explorations in contemporary photography. It is known that while photographs can capture nature in its exactness, the photo is also capable of exploiting the hidden and the overlooked. One of his popular experimentations was “Black-White-Gray”. This moveable light sculpture was created with opaque, transparent, and translucent material operated by a motor. It created a variety of different forms as it rotated

which allowed Moholy-Nagy to capture beautiful photos of his “light-display machine” in motion (Newhall 350-52). With these pictures, he edited them into a movie in a way that there was constant motion where the light flowed and waned. It is experiments like these that prove Moholy-Nagy to be an influential individual in multiple aspects of the design field.

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