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MOVEMENTS

ARTISTS

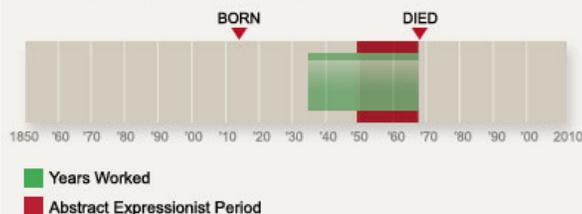
TIMELINES

IDEAS & CRITICS

CURRENT EVENTS

Adolph ("Ad") Dietrich Friedrich Reinhardt

Born: December 24, 1913, Buffalo, New York
Died: August 30, 1967, New York City



"As an artist I would like to eliminate the symbolic pretty much, for black is interesting not as a color but as a non-color and as the absence of color."

Ad Reinhardt**AD REINHARDT SYNOPSIS**

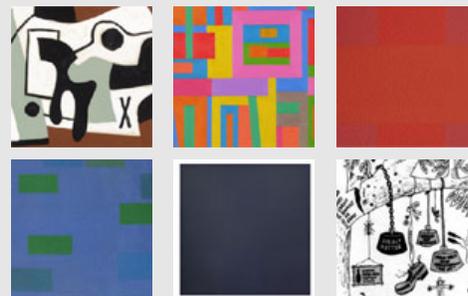
Ad Reinhardt was a prominent American abstract artist, writer, critic, and educator. Although commonly associated with the **Abstract Expressionists**, his work had its origins in **geometric abstraction**, and, increasingly seeking to purify his painting of everything he saw as extraneous to art, he rejected the movement's expressionism. Although he was in turn rejected by many of his peers, he was later hailed as a prophet by **Minimalists**. His *Black Paintings*, which occupied him from 1954 until his death, are regarded as his crowning achievement, while the many cartoons he created that made fun of the art world brought him fame as a wry commentator.

AD REINHARDT KEY IDEAS

- Ad Reinhardt is one of the few major American artists to have explored geometric abstraction and, unlike many of those **Cubist-** and **Bauhaus-**influenced artists who did, he firmly opposed attempts to put abstraction in the service of design - be it for the purposes of decoration, industrial design, or advertising.
- His most famous series, the *Black Paintings* (1954-67), are all uniform, five-foot squares and are composed such that a ghostly Greek cross hovers, barely visible, in a mist of barely distinguished black and gray hues. Reinhardt felt they represented the ultimate in abstract painting - paintings that were concerned with art alone and bore no reference to anything outside themselves - not even to the hints of soul and angst in Abstract Expressionist pictures.
- Although Reinhardt sought to remove all references to the external world from his pictures, he remained convinced that his art had the potential to affect social change. He also maintained an interest in various types of mysticism - something the viewer might appreciate in the struggle to comprehend the barely delineated forms in his *Black Paintings* (1954-67).

COMMENT TO EDITOR **AD REINHARDT BIOGRAPHY**

ANALYSIS OF AD REINHARDT'S ART WORKS:



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FEATURED BOOKS: ?

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- ★ ▶ **Ad Reinhardt**
By Yves-Alain Bois
- ▶ **Ad Reinhardt**
By Michael Corris

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written by artist

- ★ ▶ **Art as Art: The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt**
By Ad Reinhardt, Barbara Rose (editor)

WEB RESOURCES:

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websites

- ▶ **Ad Reinhardt Papers at the Smithsonian Archives of American Art**
Provides Access to Ad Reinhardt's Writings, Drawings, and Printed Materials from the Smithsonian Archives

- ▶ **The AXA Reinhardt Project at the Guggenheim Museum**
Includes Information about the Conservation of Reinhardt's Black Paintings

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articles

- ★ ▶ **Opening Lines: The Drawings of Ad Reinhardt**
By Prudence Peiffer
Artforum
February 2012
- ▶ **Tall, Dark, and Fragile**
By Holland Cotter
The New York Times
August 1, 2008

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Childhood

Adolph Frederick Reinhardt was born in Buffalo, New York, to a family of immigrants. The family settled in New York City soon after his birth. He excelled at school and exhibited an interest in the visual arts from an early age; in high school, he worked as an illustrator for the school's newspaper. An inveterate reader, he set his sights on the elite universities of the east coast and turned down several scholarships from art schools, opting instead for undergraduate studies in art history at Columbia University in New York, which he commenced in 1931.

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AD REINHARDT LEGACY

Ad Reinhardt's oeuvre remains a pivotal cornerstone in the evolution from the **Abstract Expressionism** of the 1950s to the **Minimal** and **Conceptual** art movements of the following decade. Often ridiculed by his expressionist peers, Reinhardt came to be seen as a priest and prophet figure by the subsequent generation, for whom he provided a bridge back to **Constructivism**. While it is debatable whether Reinhardt ever managed to completely purge his art so completely of references to the outside world, this aim was identical with that of **Minimalists** such as Frank Stella, Donald Judd, and Robert Morris.

Original content written by Ivan Savvine

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AD REINHARDT QUOTES

- "Art is art-as-art and everything else is everything else."
- "The only way to say what abstract is, is to say what it is not."
- "Painting cannot be the only activity of a mature artist."
- "My painting represents the victory of the forces of darkness and peace over the powers of light and evil."
- "As an artist I would like to eliminate the symbolic pretty much, for black is interesting not as a color but as a non-color and as the absence of color."
- "I want to emphasize the idea of black as intellectuality and conventionality."
- "My paintings are the last paintings one can make."



Ad Reinhardt Influences
Interactive chart with Ad Reinhardt's main influencers, and the people and ideas that the artist influenced in turn.
[CLICK TO EXPAND ▶](#)

20

46

59

92

35
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65

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69

92

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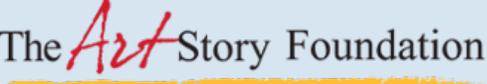
- ▶ [AB EX NY: Ad Reinhardt](#)
- ▶ [AB EX NY: The Painting Techniques of Ad Reinhardt](#)

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Ronnie Daelemans · HIBS

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