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Kazimir (Severinovich) Malevich
 Born: February 23, 1879, Near Kiev, Ukraine
 Died: May 15, 1935, Leningrad, USSR

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"To the Suprematist the visual phenomena of the objective world are, in themselves, meaningless; the significant thing is feeling, as such, quite apart from the environment in which it is called forth."

Казимир

KAZIMIR MALEVICH SYNOPSIS

Kazimir Malevich was the founder of the artistic and philosophical school of **Suprematism**, and his ideas about forms and meaning in art would eventually constitute the theoretical underpinnings of non-objective, or abstract, art. Malevich worked in a variety of styles, but his most important and famous works concentrated on the exploration of pure geometric forms (squares, triangles, and circles) and their relationships to each other and within the pictorial space. Because of his contacts in the West, Malevich was able to transmit his ideas about painting to his fellow artists in Europe and the United States, thus profoundly influencing the evolution of modern art.

KAZIMIR MALEVICH KEY IDEAS

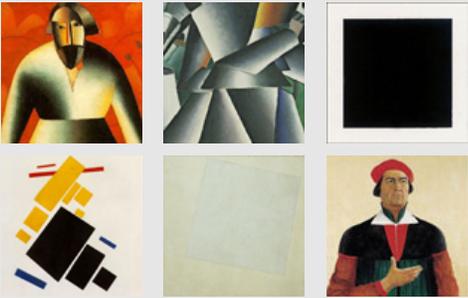
- Malevich worked in a variety of styles, but he is mostly known for his contribution to the formation of a true Russian avant-garde post-World War I through his own unique philosophy of perception and painting, which he termed Suprematism. He invented this term because, ultimately, he believed that art should transcend subject matter -- the truth of shape and color should reign 'supreme' over the image or narrative.
- More radical than the Cubists or Futurists, at the same time that his Suprematist compositions proclaimed that paintings were composed of flat, abstract areas of paint, they also served up powerful and multi-layered symbols and mystical feelings of time and space.
- Malevich was also a prolific writer. His treatises on the philosophy of art addressed a broad spectrum of theoretical problems conceiving of a comprehensive abstract art and its ability to lead us to our feelings and even to a new spirituality.

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Malevich was born in Ukraine to parents of Polish origin, who moved continuously within the Russian Empire in search of work. His father took jobs in a sugar factory and in railway construction, where young Kazimir was also employed in his early teenage years. Without any particular encouragement from his family, Malevich started to draw around the age of 12. With his mind set firmly on an artistic career, Malevich attended a number of art schools in his youth, starting at the Kiev School of Art in 1895.

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KAZIMIR MALEVICH LEGACY

Malevich conceived of Suprematism prior to the 1917 Revolution, but its influence was already significant amongst the Russian avant-garde. Malevich's use of non-representational imagery and his interest in dynamic geometrical form in pictorial space influenced the art of Lyubov Popova, Alexander Rodchenko, and El Lissitzky. In 1922, the artist devised his three-dimensional Suprematist works, called *arkhitektony*, which were studies in architectural form. Some of Malevich's ideas were exported to the West through the exhibition of these Suprematist models for Utopian towns in Poland and Germany, where the avant-garde discourse would incorporate Malevich's theoretical perspectives on abstraction. Malevich made only one trip to the West in 1927, accompanied by a number of Suprematist canvases, which were exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, where they were subsequently seen by many European artists. In Warsaw, Malevich met with artists who had studied with him in Vitebsk, and whose work was heavily influenced by Malevich's monochrome works. More broadly, Malevich's influence is evident in the work of later artists in Europe and particularly the United States whose work consists of totally abstract shapes that represent technology, universality, or spirituality -- all ideas stemming from Malevich. Thus, through both his art and his writing, Malevich paved the way for many generations of later abstract artists -- especially Ad Reinhardt and all Minimalist art -- to free themselves from reliance upon the real world.

Original content written by Ivan Savvine

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KAZIMIR MALEVICH QUOTES

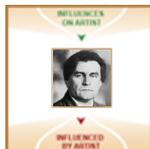
"Academic naturalism, the naturalism of the Impressionists, Cezanneism, Cubism, etc., all these, in a way, are nothing more than dialectic methods which, as such, in no sense determine the true value of an art work."

"Feeling is the determining factor ... and thus art arrives at non-objective representation through Suprematism."

"No more 'likenesses of reality,' no idealistic images, nothing but a desert!"

"Suprematism is the rediscovery of pure art which, in the course of time, had become obscured by the accumulation of "things"."

"The black square on the white field was the first form in which nonobjective feeling came to be expressed. The square = feeling, the white field = the void beyond this feeling."



Kazimir Malevich Influences

Interactive chart with Kazimir Malevich's main influencers, and the people and ideas that the artist influenced in turn.

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93 59 22 83 Like 11 38 72 67

Malevich

By Boris Groys
e-flux
September 2013

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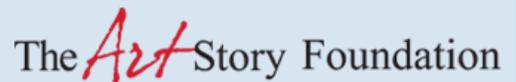
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