

# Good report about russian constructivism

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



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Russian Constructivism was founded by Vladimir Tatlin as a new interdisciplinary movement. Its name was coined from Tatlin's construction of abstract sculptures (Fleming, 2009). The movement entailed the Russian Avant-garde and was in action from 1913 to the 1940's. It came in as an artistic and architectural philosophy, a diversion from the idea of autonomous art. It favored art as a practice for social purposes and had a great impact on modern art movements of the 20th century, where great movements such as Bauhaus and De Stijl have borrowed a great deal from it (Cracraft, 2003). Its effect was omnipresent with great impacts on architecture, graphic and industrial design.

Russian art runs back as early as 1914, however, the word war 1 and the Bolshevik revolution brought lots of transformation on the cultural life of Russia. Three years later, the impact was so large that it shattered the private art market and in its place the Avant-Garde artists took charge of existing pedagogical institutions and went further to establish new ones. This led to the brief ascendancy of the Constructivist and Suprematist movements. Constructivism rejected easel painting which was then used as an expression of bourgeois-dominated society (Walther, 2000).

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Indeed Vladimir Tatlin represents the rejection through his announcement of the death of traditional art and in its place constructing a three dimensional machine-inspired, abstract sculptures and reliefs. Both the constructivist and suprematist movements merged under El Lissitzky and Alexander Rodchenko with far reaching innovations in graphic arts. They designed Soviet propaganda posters and advertising with a goal to subliminally alter people's mentality, selling to them both artistic movements and communism values.

## **Model for the 3rd International Tower, (1919-1920)**

Suprematist Composition, (Malevich, 1915)

The Russian Constructivism design movement

It is of importance to note that although the movement's origin were in Russia, the main impact was experienced in Germany the then major conduit for the international influence of the Avant-Garde artists. The Russian constructivists became a big name to reckon with at the Bauhaus school of design (MacKenzie, 2008). In 1922, Kandinsky moved to Germany to teach basic courses on color theory, drawing and abstract form at the Bauhaus school. The works of Malevich and Rodchenko were exhibited and reproduced in journals along with other Russian Avant-grade artists. Lissitzky one of the artist went as far as being involved in the Soviet campaign aimed at attracting Western intellectuals to communism. In fact, one his German followers, Jan Tschichold, wrote major books and articles which encouraged the use of the Constructivist and Suprematist style in lettering and advertisements. His rationale was that this would change the look of modern print which then would attract the eye of the consumer infusing in them the need to buy more goods (Marks, 2003).

## **Beat the Whites with Red Wedge (Lissitzky, 1919)**

Tschichold's works served a great deal in helping graphic artists in the United States by opening them to the visual vocabulary emanating from USSR and the Bauhaus (Kiaer, 2008). It was not until the Great Depression that it was widely embraced. By then corporations were desperately trying to figure out a way to improve their image and sell their products. They chose to present themselves as technological innovators whose products would stand as the height of ultra-modern (Gough, 2005). To do this they adopted the Russian aesthetic which easily conveyed this message. As a result, the graphic-design elements from the early-soviet avant-garde got purpose, serving the needs of big companies and pulling them away from their initial anti-capitalist message. These elements as years pass have become ubiquitous, from print, product packaging to house ware patterns.

Constructivism had its roots in Russia Futurism, as a result, one of its major characteristics was to have a total commitment and acceptance of modernity. The art was abstract with main emphasis on geometric shapes and experimentation (Gelman, 1995). Furthermore, it was optimistic, had no emotional orientation with subjectivity and individuality being subsumed to favor objectivity. Given that Constructivist art movement emerged immediately after World War 1, the movement aimed at sweeping away all that had brought such a catastrophic war. As such it had to bring an environment of greater understanding, peace and unity which would then influence the social and economic problems (Omarovich, 1986). Thus, another characteristic of the Constructivist artworks is that they would be reductive in nature, simplifying things into the most basic fundamental level.

## **Conclusion**

The Constructivist Movement arose at a time when corporations needed to shine in terms of how consumers viewed them (Cooke, 1995). That need is still strongly embedded in the contemporary world. Not many may appreciate the origin of the methods they apply. For example, people at Walmart headquarters, Arkansas maybe clueless on the revolutionary origins of the symbols used in the Sam's Club Logo early 2000s. In fact, even they did it would not matter that much. This would really be disappointing to the great artist of the Avant-Garde knowing to what extent they would help polish the corporate image. Its ironical but still despite the lack of awareness or ignorance to some point, these great artists' creations have significantly altered the aesthetic landscape of the ultra-modern world.

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