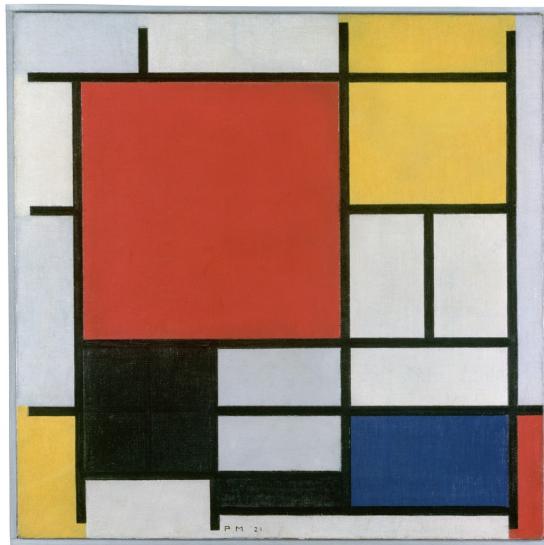


You! Seeker of Mystical Communions with an Ultimate Realty:  
The Role of the Occult for the Artist in the Dawn of Modernism

Sean Kiley  
Music History Paper  
University of Victoria  
Professor Katharina Clausius  
2018

In an article by Alex Ross speculating on the role of the occult in the roots of modernism, he concludes by citing Clement Greenberg's theory of modernist painting progressively surrendering to the resistance of its medium, as well as Theodor W. Adorno's concept of the "inherent tendency of the musical material". However, Ross then wonders if "such sober formulas fail to capture the roiling transcendental longings of a Kandinsky or a Schoenberg." (Ross). Appending this idea from Ross, upon closer inspection into the works of Piet Mondrian and Erik Satie it would seem that the dawn of these modernist tendencies codified through logic by Greenberg and Adorno are conversely born in a more mystical and nebulous spiritual realm.

Greenberg's theory of modernism logically concludes that the characteristic methods of a discipline have ultimately become utilized to criticize the discipline itself; this 'criticism' was not designed to subvert the art, but "entrench it more firmly in its area of competence". Thereby, the medium of the art, specifically painting, is made-up of its limitations and serves to demonstrate the art's purity. Since the aspect of flatness is unique to the painting, modernist painters cultivated an aesthetic from this 'flatness' (2). Greenberg makes use of Piet Mondrian's "Composition in Red, Yellow, Blue and Black" [1921] to illustrate the idea of flatness. The colored rectangles framed by crossing black lines serve to mirror the shape of the frame itself and "create a force of completeness derived from the frame itself". Greenberg also notes, that once the initial shock of the abstraction passes, the viewer realizes the works conventionality in terms of color and line (3-5).



*Composition in Red, Yellow, Blue and Black [1921]*

Although Greenberg's theory specifically addresses painting, this distillation of art confronting its own medium also applies to the works of composer Erik Satie. The essence of flatness in painting is comparable to two mediums in music, time and vibration. In response to being called "a clumsy, but subtle technician" Satie preferred to refer to himself as a 'phonometrician' instead of a 'musician'. A phonometrician is defined as "someone who measures and writes down sounds"; by acting as such Satie has boiled music down to its essence: vibration (Mimosvet). This is most evident in his work *Les Fils des Étoiles*, for piano; the music begins with six-note chords arranged in a simple chant-like melody, one chord after another presented in static succession. The chords are made up of stacked intervals of the fourth and a tritone, which indicate an essentially 'atonal' context, years before Arnold Schoenberg's first atonal works. Satie's intention is merely a presentation of the sounds themselves, divorced from context of music's traditional syntax. Additionally, an instruction at the top of the score instructs the performer to play "white and motionless" so that the listener can simply perceive these 'vibrations' Satie has notated (Ross).

In the work *Vexations* not only does Satie similarly present a succession of measured vibrations, but he also distills the music down to its temporality. The score is comprised of a mere three part musical phrase that wanders up and down, pointing towards no clear tonality; Satie instructs the performer to play this phrase 840 times. This ad nauseam repetition of the same musical figure extrapolates the musical experience from a perceived development of a musical syntax, and places it in the time domain. Similar to the way Mondrian's paintings use primary colors and black lines to mirror the frame itself, Satie's seemingly endlessly repeated, measured vibrations mirror the musical frame of time, forcing the listener to experience this work as a product of temporality.

I am in agreement with Greenberg's theory and have even affirmed that it can be applied to other art forms. However, these 'sober formulas' of art posited by Greenberg and Adorno seem to rest on the back some greater force at work in the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the dawn of modernism this force is that of 'the occult'. The word occult is derived from the Latin word 'occultus', which translates to hidden, secret, or clandestine. The occult is defined as a knowledge of what is hidden; it is also synonymous with the word 'esotericism'. That which is hidden for the occultist, are matters involving the action or influence of supernatural agencies. A student of the occult searches for a deeper spiritual reality beyond the physical sciences and beyond pure reason. Spiritual orders that claim to hold knowledge of the supernatural are said to be occultist, these orders can range drastically with teachings and practice. Nonetheless, common practices among occult groups include: alchemy, popularly misconstrued as the pseudo-science where one tries to influence the rate of radioactive decay in an element's atomic structure; astrology,

which makes inferences on the behavior of people or individuals based on the location of constellations; magic, which employs the use of sigils to alter one's external reality; and extra-sensory perception, or ESP, where individuals can communicate without verbal indication. Occult practices also incorporate, spiritualism, divination, and religion. The dawn of these groups date back to the early Christian era (although many claim pre-Abrahamic origin) through the present century and include philosophies such as Hermeticism, Kabbalah, Gnosticism, Obeah, Theosophy, and Rosicrucianism, the latter two of which are explored here as the two main orders impacting modernism (Occult). A vital part of every occultist order focuses on mysticism, where one seeks an “experience of mystical union of direction communion with ultimate reality.” (Henderson 5). It should be noted that mysticism as a practice can be explored outside of the occult context; however, in the case of many modernist artists, it is these occult orders that introduced them to forms of mysticism.

In the induction of a mystical experience, what then is an ‘ultimate reality’? The meaning of this ‘reality’ that artists ultimately adopted is best illustrated by the intellectual climate of the late nineteenth century. Scientific advancements delved deeper into the microscopic complex structures of matter and burgeoning psychological theories proposed a mirrored complexity in the workings of the human mind. The newly affixed lenses of these philosophical quandaries concerning relationships between a perceiving subject and an object itself caused artists to begin to speculate the true nature of their reality. In 1859, Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species* followed by *The Descent of Man* in 1871. This theory of evolution challenged the doctrines of the

dominant spiritual authority, the Catholic Church; unwillingness to accept evolution in its doctrine caused a fission from the Church amongst artists. To the artist, evolution was the most palpable truth discovered in his/her life times; and many rationalized that the arts presented a gateway through which a new level of evolution from human form could be reached. Many had already sought to induce a ‘heaven-like’ state of being on earth through their art. Gradually, an artistic concept of evolution developed in artist communities where the general credence was that consciousness had caused a disharmony from humankind’s past relationship of harmony with nature’s rhythm. The desire to return to harmony was pursued by provoking transcendence<sup>1</sup> through abstraction, which sought to portray “the image of this regained harmony” (MacChiarella 9).

As these beliefs coalesced in the West, many spiritual and mystical individuals saw artists and the public tapping into a forgotten mysticism cultivated by occult orders centuries before. Orders like Hermeticism claimed archaic knowledge of the spiritual evolution of humans since before the birth of Christ. The mythological Hermetic founder Hermes Trismegistus, was said to have preached the principle of vibration, whereby nothing is ever truly still, which science had just so recently realized the truth of by peering into the atomic levels where particles stirred in constant motion. The atmosphere of spiritual yearning was ripe for secret occult groups to reach out and induct new artistic members into their societies.

---

<sup>1</sup> Transcendence in the context of this paper refers simply to a surpassing of ordinary. From a religious/spiritual perspective this entails reaching a state of mental and spiritual being that permits entrance into a realm outside the normally perceptible ‘material universe’ (Dictionary).

Sâr Joséphin Péladan became one of the first mystics of the 19th century to adopt artists into his order the ‘Rose + Croix’. Claiming descent from the arcane medieval order of the Rosicrucians, the Rose + Croix under Péladan cultivated a doctrine conceiving of the universe as a subdivided realm of the physical and metaphysical. In the wake of a spiritual void left by rationalism, the Rose + Croix re-interpreted traditional Catholic dogma to fit into a theory of spiritual transcendence; Péladan’s manifestos preached that through contemplation of art, humans could reach a godlike state. He expressed that humans could become like the Catholic God by expanding their consciousness and by renouncing materialism. In 1890, Péladan founded the ‘Salon de la Rose + Croix’ in Paris. The Salon embraced the Symbolist movement, as Péladan himself was a novelist and playwright concerned with ancient, pagan and explicit concepts. By designing a spiritually aesthetic setting for concerts, paintings and lectures, the Salon attracted the spiritually hungry artists in France like Jean Moréas, author of the Symbolist Manifesto. The explicit material and radical beliefs put forth by Péladan were more easily integrated into the culture in France at that time due to the earlier writings of poets like Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud who depicted the true nature of their despondent urban realities at the time (MacChiarella 10, 17, 21, 26). In his book *Modernism and the Occult* John Bramble writes that the Salon de la Rose + Croix was the “first attempt at a (semi-) internationalist ‘religion of modern art’ —an aesthetic order with Péladan as high priest.” (qtd. in Ross).

Erik Satie met Joséphin Péladan while working as a cabaret pianist in 1890. Péladan offered Satie the position of in-house pianist for the Salon de la Rose + Croix, which he accepted. Satie would compose and perform processional and functional music

for the Salon; Péladan would concoct displays of grandeur and solemnity through Church-like entrances for the exhibitions. Satie was tasked with composing a musical atmosphere, which would subconsciously “impart the noble ideas of the Sâr” and urge those in attendance to commit themselves to the order (MacChiarella 16, 17). Satie’s scores at this time were often marked up with un-performable instructions such as “Arm yourself with clairvoyance” or “Open your head”. The role of these instructions was to communicate the color, motion, and feeling the performer should try to convey in his<sup>2</sup> interpretation of the material. In 1891, Satie composed *Les Fils des Étoiles* for a play of that title written by Péladan. The plot is set in 3500 B.C. Chaldea and follows a young shepherd-poet as he is initiated as a magus, or sorcerer. Here, in the performer’s instructions on the score, Satie writes “white and motionless”. Instead of events being emotionally mirrored by the music as in the case of Wagnerian opera, the play alone depicts the story. Satie has entrenched the music in its area of competence for such a context: vibration. He notes in program that the listener is prepared psychologically for the scene, which he/she will contemplate; we feel the air of the setting in the play through Satie’s measured vibrations. Thus, it is through the occult that Satie stumbles upon this pure, ‘phonometric’ display of music (Ross).

Two years later in 1893, Satie composed *Vexations*. Atop the score he writes “To play this motif 840 times in succession, it would be advisable to prepare oneself beforehand, in the deepest silence, by serious immobilities”. Even with its numerous unwavering repetitions, the material in *Vexations* feels melodically ungraspable; it is not a tune that listeners would whistle aloud after hearing. This quality of un- memorability

---

<sup>2</sup> Women were not permitted to attend these exhibitions at the Salon; however, many female artists were exhibited under a male pseudonym (MacChiarella).

results in an absence of thematic material, for which memory is an intrinsic detail. As such, *Vexations* becomes “a ground with no figures”, vis-à-vis, flat. Instead, the audience and performer become the figures, and the dramatic action is transferred to the listener’s psychological transformation throughout the performance. The music went largely undiscovered until its first public performance put together by John Cage, which lasted 19 hours. Many have dismissed the direction for the performer to repeat the music such a vast number of times as a hallmark of the well-known comedic or ironic side of Satie’s music, but Cage notes that “the textual remarks in connection with the ‘Vexations’ are not humorous; they are in the spirit of Zen Buddhism.” It is designed as a meditation, where the music serves as the mantra (Whittington).

At the time of its composition, Satie’s only documented love affair with Suzanne Valadon had come to a painful end; on this subject, Satie writes “I shall have great difficulty in regaining possession of myself, loving this little person as I have loved her...She was able to take all of me. Time will do what at this moment I cannot do.” (Whittington). Satie had also recently broke with Péladan and founded his own personal cult, ‘The Metropolitan Church of Art of Jesus, Leader’. We can imagine him seated at the piano in his one-room apartment in the Rue Cortot repeating the musical material of ‘Vexations’ hundreds of times as a process of healing, as one of inducing a deep meditation on the self. And even if the intention of the instruction is humorous, is laughter not the most effective psychotherapy of all time? Perhaps Satie adopts an ironic detachment to combat his spiritual crisis. The identifiable self-mockery and ironicism of Satie is elevated in this work to an artistic method by virtue of the fact that *Vexations* becomes a parody of itself, unable to be parodied (Whittington).

As noted with *Les Fils des Étoiles*, functional harmony is absent in Satie's music at this time. Instead harmony is re-invented as a “floating, sculptured sound” (Ross). These sculptured sounds come from elaborately worked-out systems illustrated in Satie's notebooks, in which he states “I am obliged to perform tours-de-force just to write a single bar”. The roots of such systems employed can be seen at work the significance of the number of repetitions in ‘Vexations’: 840. While they are a myriad of ways to interpret this figure through the lens of numerology (another common occult practice), the most convincing is one outlined by Martha Curti (now Mother Felicitas). The first step in dissecting a numerical figure is to separate and add the digits, which yields:

$$8 + 4 + 0 = 12$$

and

$$1 + 2 = 3$$

To outline the significance of each digit:

“Eight represents a new beginning, a resurrection, a rebirth restarting a cycles.”

“Four represent earth, visible creation – four directions – four elements.”

“Zero represent non-being, eternity.”

“Twelve represent the cosmic order, salvation, completeness.”

And “Three represents the Trinity, perfection, heaven.” (Corner).

There's a clear psychological connection behind the meanings of these numbers and the state in which Satie was in after the end of his passionate romance. This succession of emotions and reflections is not dissimilar in documented audience reactions to experiencing this work *Vexations*. In these accounts, the general consensus is a series of stages where fascination morphs into agitation, which gradually morphs into all-

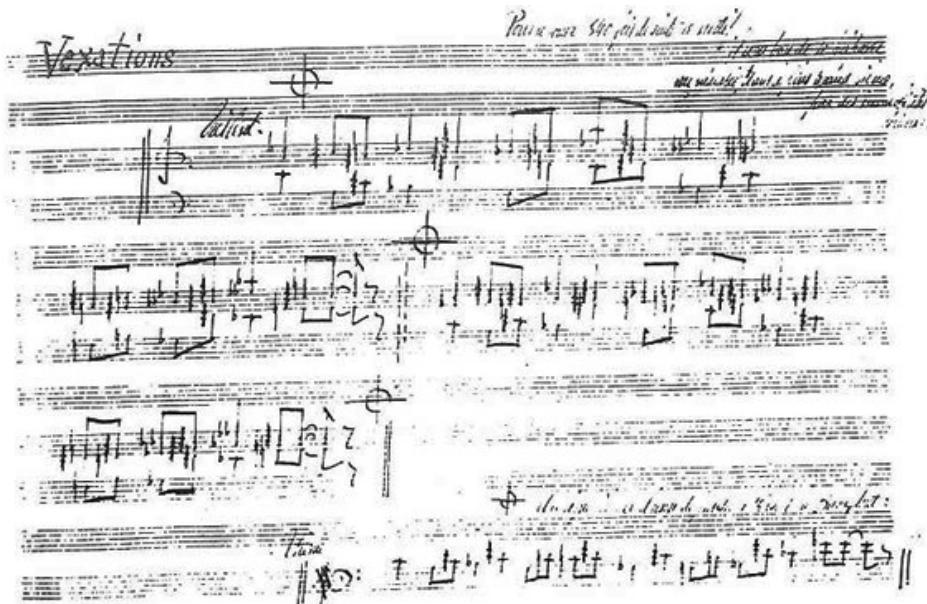
encompassing agony, but for those who withstand this agony, they gradually enter a state of deep tranquility (Sweet). Similarly, composer Dick Higgins notes:

the music first becomes so familiar that is seems extremely offensive and objectionable. But after that the mind slowly becomes incapable of taking further offence, and a very strange euphoric acceptance and enjoyment begin to set in...

Is it boring? Only at first. After a while the euphoria... begins to intensify. By the time the piece is over, the silence is absolutely numbing, so much of an environment has the piece become (qtd. in Whittington).

Perhaps though, what is most interesting about *Vexations* is the effect it has on the performer him/herself. Aside from the murky tonal directions and ‘illogical’ harmonic inventions in the piece, the notation itself is rather complicated. By use of enharmonic equivalents (e.g. Eb = D#, etc.) the intervallic motion of the notes becomes counterintuitive; for instance, when Satie writes a D# followed by a Cb, on the musical staff, this appears to move downwards only the interval of a second, but what the performer must realize is that this step downward is actually two semi-tones larger than a major second interval making it a major third. These purposeful complications require the performer to affix his/her concentration with equal intensity through each repetition as to not make a mistake; pianists claim that this fiendish notation seems to entail them to sight-read the piece over and over again with every repetition. It is as if this complex form of notation is actually written in code to express a musical secret doctrine, an alchemical formula, or magical spell. Regardless of speculations into the shrouds of

mystery behind *Vexations*, the work clearly conveys “flatness” in a Greenberg sense, on more levels than one, and contains firm roots in its occult-based influence (Whittington).



### *Vexations*

Many years prior to the first Salon de la Rose + Croix in Paris, Madame Helena Blavatsky, a Russian immigrant, founded the Theosophical Society in New York with Henry Steel Olcott. She saw herself not as a prophet through whom truths were transmuted, but instead as a vessel for synthesizing the great religious traditions and spiritual practices under one banner, where the “knowledge of the laws which govern the universe” would be collected and diffused to the world. Blavatsky published *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888, which fused the likes of Asian scripture, Hindu and Buddhist tradition, Rosicrucianism, Masonic and Templar mythology, and Western magick into an all-encompassing ‘Theosophy’ (Katinka). In this way, Blavatsky sought to expose and eliminate the imagined barriers, which separated humans from one another such as race, class, nation and religion. At its core, Theosophy points to the invisible and visible

makeup of the universe, where no unsolvable mystery resides in this completeness. Events that are inaccurately described as “miraculous” or “supernatural” actually arise from Laws of Nature, which govern the natural universe and are known in the souls of the practicing Theosophists; the reign of law is what gave rise to circumstance, coincidence does not exist in the Theosophists vocabulary. “Rather than being a religion, it could be described as the very essence of religion itself...” (Akman).

Theosophy spread to Europe with the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*, and by 1904, Rudolf Steiner had become head of the ‘Theosophical Esoteric Society for Germany and Austria’. A well-known philosopher, Steiner cultivated ‘Anthroposophy’, which preaches development of thought independent of sensory experience. Inner growth of perceptive imagination, inspiration, and intuition allow the individual to commune with an objective and intellectually comprehensible spiritual world. These faculties could be refined through meditative exercises, which reinforce ‘positive mystical’ observations. Steiner lectured throughout Europe and soon made his way to the Dutch Theosophical branch. By 1909, Piet Mondrian had joined this Dutch Theosophical Society after having read *The Secret Doctrine*. His intuitions towards art’s symbiotic relationship to spirituality were confirmed by Steiner, who explained how types of occult impulses would “work themselves into the Etheric Body”, but had to be awakened by “devotional religious feelings, true art, and music” (Welsh).

The influence of Theosophy is evident in Mondrian’s early symbolist work. The ideas of Darwinism and spiritual evolution are mirrored in Mondrian’s ‘Evolution

Triptych'. Here, he depicts three androgynous<sup>3</sup> figures, two of which are painted with eyes closed and heads positioned upward towards the heavens; the third figure in the center represents the culmination of the spiritual journey; surrounded by gold, the figure stares out of the canvas, awakened to the calls of spiritual transcendence. Mondrian also represents the astral shells or auras of beings and objects such as in 'Devotion' where the chrysanthemum is embellished with a colored halo. These auras are not meant to be interpreted on a symbolic level, but instead function as an indication of a spiritual state of being (Welsh). The artists in search of spiritual fulfillment slowly refined a creed that expressed ideas on how to attain equilibrium between the non-natural and nature. Many, including Mondrian believed that art acts a placeholder in representing this equilibrium; once it has been attained and harmony was realized in humankind's outward surroundings, it will no longer be required of art to express these desires. Following this line of thought, art began to internalize natural externality until nature no longer dominated the canvas, thus equating humankind with nature by portraying the elements that make up the physical world inherent in humans and nature (Mondrian).



*Evolution Triptych*



*Devotion*

---

<sup>3</sup> A common occult ideal, representative of the synthesis of gender.

The *De Stijl* movement serves to explain this arrival to abstraction as the result of the motivation within artists to translate their vision of a ‘world as one’ in a social sense. In order to convey this truth, the art required a simple and precise surface presentation, so that when consulted on deeper level, it could reveal its intrinsic complexity and communicate the mystery of the divine. Works were designed to be realized in the mind of the viewer through the configuration of perceptibly separate elements that held true cohesion only as whole. Analyzing Mondrian’s series of ‘Composition(s)’ through the lens of *De Stijl*, they appear to be intended as a reaction to the instability of the world in its current state. Using sharply contrasted ninety-degree angles painted in black, Mondrian expressed the desire for stability, permanence, and reliability, painting to evoke longings for a more utopian-like society. The colors then, (primary colors), signify simplicity and the necessary action of the world to return to a simpler state for progress to occur (Utopia/Dystopia).

Many critics attribute Mondrian’s abstract paintings to this movement, but it was ultimately through engagements with the tenants of Theosophy that Mondrian realized this abstraction. The ‘New Plastic’, a defining feature of the *De Stijl*, and also referenced in Mondrian’s writings on art was coined by a prominent theosophist M.H.J. Schoenmaeker. He sought to promote his idea that spiritual evolution required the physical and immaterial, and the real and the ideal to be unified as a whole. This unity of spiritual and natural forces in Theosophical doctrine is symbolized through simple

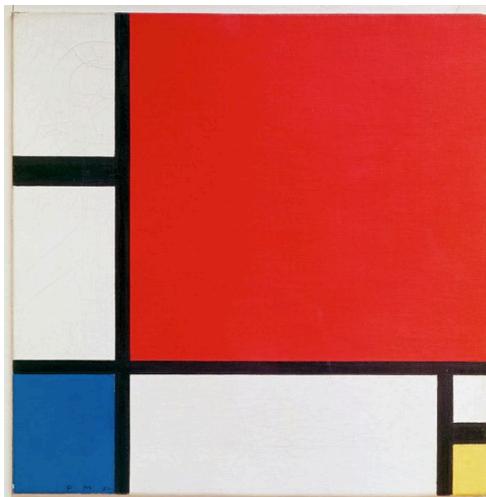
geometrical forms<sup>4</sup>. In response to the ideas of Schoenmaeker, Mondrian wrote “The new plastic cannot be cloaked in what is characteristic of the particular, natural form and color, but must be expressed by the abstraction of form and color – by means of the straight line and determinate primary color.” (Brenson) Upon grasping this concept, Mondrian formulated his obligation to connect those forces in the macrocosmic and microcosmic realms of the universe, and he began to develop a divine message in his art. Here, “the idea of Abstraction that starts to take form became a formless voice that dissolved the boundaries of the concrete object to allow the flow of cosmic light to spill forth onto an awaiting canvas, the site where the inner and outer realms of spirituality began a new creative evolution.” (Hall).

Analyzing Mondrian ‘Composition with Red Blue and Yellow’ from 1930 from a Theosophical perspective yields the deeper truths of the whole Mondrian sought to communicate. The relationships of the opposing forces of the universe, the invisible and the visible framework of all things; the positive and the negative, the dynamic and the static, the masculine and the feminine are presented in the form of vertical and horizontal lines, each traveling in an infinite direction away from the other, but containing a single crosshair where they merge, revealing they are of the same essence. The pure, primary colors indicate the simple substance matter that constitutes the universality of all things; to exist in pure harmony with nature, humanity needed to balance the impact or size of this substance matter within themselves (The Art Story). The white represents the pure form of light before it is reflected, the pure form of the soul before it is reflected upon

---

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that Mondrian also painted in the Cubist style before entering total abstraction. His paintings associated with Cubism, however, evade any indications of volume and obscure his subject matter to a near unrecognizable state (Welsh).

this earth; once all the colors or life forces balanced, they would be sent back through the prism and shine the pure essence of the universe on our souls. Here, Mondrian depicts the small windows into purity we can glimpse through spiritual transcendence, but we have not yet balanced the elements to receive the totality of the spirit; it is within the cracks of the white on the canvas where the pure essence resides. According to numerology, the number of geometrical figures present on the canvas, 7, is indicative of the seeker, the thinker and searcher of Truth; one who draws this number constantly mines for the underlying truths, never taking anything at face value (Decoz). The viewer's eyes are drawn to the upper right edge of the canvas, desiring more upon realizing the painting has stopped. The canvas beckons to be 'looked behind' as if it has covered a portal to total transcendence on the other side.



*Composition with Red Blue and Yellow [1930]*

These 'sober formulas' or overarching themes of modernism, such as 'flatness' and the 'inherent tendency of the music' wherein "compositional techniques are said to be contained in the nature of music itself and extrapolated from it, rather than imposed on it from the outside" are indubitably present in the works of Erik Satie and Piet Mondrian

(Zagorski). In his own writings Mondrian even corroborates the idea of art purifying itself to prove its competency when he states: “Therefore the possibilities of one art cannot be viewed from those of another, but must be considered independently, and only in relation to the art concerned. Every art has its own emphasis, its particular expression: this justifies the existence of the various arts. We can now define the emphasis of the art of painting as the most consistent expression of pure relationships.” (Mondrian). It is in that last line, however, where Greenberg’s theory falls...flat, so to speak. When Mondrian speaks of ‘pure relationships’ what he is conjuring is not the mere relationship of color to sight, but rather, a relationship akin to the shaking of one’s inner spiritual frame when confronted with these colors and structures. Greenberg adopts a perceptual bias in a universe only viewed through ‘materialism<sup>5</sup>’, forgetting that the likes of Mondrian and Satie sought to transcend perceivable reality and perceive the invisible. They wanted their art to communicate through this metaphysical realm in hopes that it would cause the viewer or listener to unconsciously stumble into a temporary state of being where these glimpses of the invisible could be glanced upon. Art has of course been made from a similar spiritual stance in the past, but never before had it turned so inward. Satie, alone in his apartment translating his psychological woes and desires to breath the air of another world outside his suffering through the piano, and Mondrian exploring the depths of his consciousness are both like a Tibetan psychonaut, seeking the image of abstraction to transport his soul. Truly these modernist artists were at the core motivated by desires for a mystical communion with an ultimate reality.

---

<sup>5</sup> Here meant as the doctrine that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications (Dictionary).

Works Cited

Ross, Alex. "The Occult Roots of Modernism." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 June 2017, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/06/26/the-occult-roots-of-modernism>

Greenberg, Clement. *Modernist Painting*. Voice of America, 1959.

"Eric Satie – 'Gymnopedist', 'Phonometrician' and the Furniture Music :)." *MimoSvet*, 21 Nov. 2011, [mimosvet.wordpress.com/2010/12/06/eric-satie-gymnopedist-phonometrician-and-the-furniture-music/#comments](http://mimosvet.wordpress.com/2010/12/06/eric-satie-gymnopedist-phonometrician-and-the-furniture-music/#comments).

"Occult." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 3 Apr. 2018, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occult](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occult).

Art Journal, Vol. 46, No. 1, Mysticism and Occultism in Modern Art (Spring, 1987), pp. 5-8  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/776836.pdf?refreqid=excelsior:567681a9cab69b609e1b77118eca07da>

MacChiarella , Lindsey. Shades of Ungodliness: Satie, the Occult, and the Flight from Reason. Florida State University Libraries. 2012  
<https://fsu.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fsu:182991/datastream/PDF/view>

Whittington, Stephen. "Serious Immobilities: On the Centenary of Erik Satie's Vexations." *Academia.edu - Share Research*, [www.academia.edu/171971/Serious\\_Immobilites\\_On\\_the\\_Centenary\\_of\\_Erik\\_Saties\\_Vexations](https://www.academia.edu/171971/Serious_Immobilites_On_the_Centenary_of_Erik_Saties_Vexations).

Corner, Phillip. "An Analysis of Satie's 'Vexations'." 2009, the-open-space.org/New/Vexations\_Phil\_Corner.pdf.

Sweet, Sam. "A Dangerous and Evil Piano Piece." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/a-dangerous-and-evil-piano-piece](https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/a-dangerous-and-evil-piano-piece).

Ross, Alex. "Satie Vexations." *Alex Ross: The Rest Is Noise*, New York Times, 20 May 1993, [www.therestisnoise.com/2004/10/satie\\_vexations\\_1.html](http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/10/satie_vexations_1.html).

"Art and Theosophy." *Modern Art and Theosophy - Theosophical History*, 2006, [www.katinkahessellink.net/his/theosophy-art.html](http://www.katinkahessellink.net/his/theosophy-art.html).

Akman, Kubilay. "Theosophy – An Explanation and Overview." *Theosophy*, 24 Aug. 2017, [blavatskytheosophy.com/theosophy-an-explanation-and-overview/](http://blavatskytheosophy.com/theosophy-an-explanation-and-overview/).

Welsh, Robert P. "Mondrian and Theosophy – Part One." *Home*, 27 Sept. 2012, [www.theosophyforward.com/index.php/theosophy-and-the-society-in-the-public-eye/643-mondrian-and-theosophy-part-one.html](http://www.theosophyforward.com/index.php/theosophy-and-the-society-in-the-public-eye/643-mondrian-and-theosophy-part-one.html).

Mondrian, Piet. "Piet Mondrian's 'The Realization of Neoplasticism in the Distant Future and in Architecture Today: Architecture, Conceived as Our Total [Non-Natural] Environment' (1922)." *Modernist Architecture*, 18 Oct. 2010, [modernistarchitecture.wordpress.com/2010/10/18/piet-mondrian-%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Cthe-realization-of-neoplasticism-in-the-distant-future-and-in-architecture-today-architecture-conceived-as-our-total-non-natural-environment%E2%80%9D-1922/](http://modernistarchitecture.wordpress.com/2010/10/18/piet-mondrian-%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Cthe-realization-of-neoplasticism-in-the-distant-future-and-in-architecture-today-architecture-conceived-as-our-total-non-natural-environment%E2%80%9D-1922/).

"Composition with Red, Yellow, and Blue." *Utopia/Dystopia*, 2 Jan. 2013, [utopiadystopiaawi.wordpress.com/de-stijl/piet-mondrian/composition-with-red-yellow-and-blue/](http://utopiadystopiaawi.wordpress.com/de-stijl/piet-mondrian/composition-with-red-yellow-and-blue/).

Brenson, Michael. "Art View; How The Spiritual Infused The Abstract." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 21 Dec. 1986, [www.nytimes.com/1986/12/21/arts/art-view-how-the-spiritual-infused-the-abstract.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1986/12/21/arts/art-view-how-the-spiritual-infused-the-abstract.html).

Hall, Kathleen. "Theosophy and the Emergence of Modern Abstract Art." *Home - Theosophical Society in America*, 2002, [www.theosophical.org/publications/quest-magazine/42-publications/quest-magazine/1446-theosophy-and-the-emergence-of-modern-abstract-art](http://www.theosophical.org/publications/quest-magazine/42-publications/quest-magazine/1446-theosophy-and-the-emergence-of-modern-abstract-art).

Decoz, Hans. "Number 7 Numerology." *Number 7 Numerology / Numerology.com*, [www.numerology.com/numerology-numbers/7](http://www.numerology.com/numerology-numbers/7).

"Piet Mondrian Biography, Art, and Analysis of Works." *The Art Story*, [www.theartstory.org/artist-mondrian-piet.htm](http://www.theartstory.org/artist-mondrian-piet.htm).

Zagorski, Marcus. "Adorno and Musical Material." *Tempus Konnex*, 2017, <https://www.tempus-konnex.com/adorno-and-musical-material>.