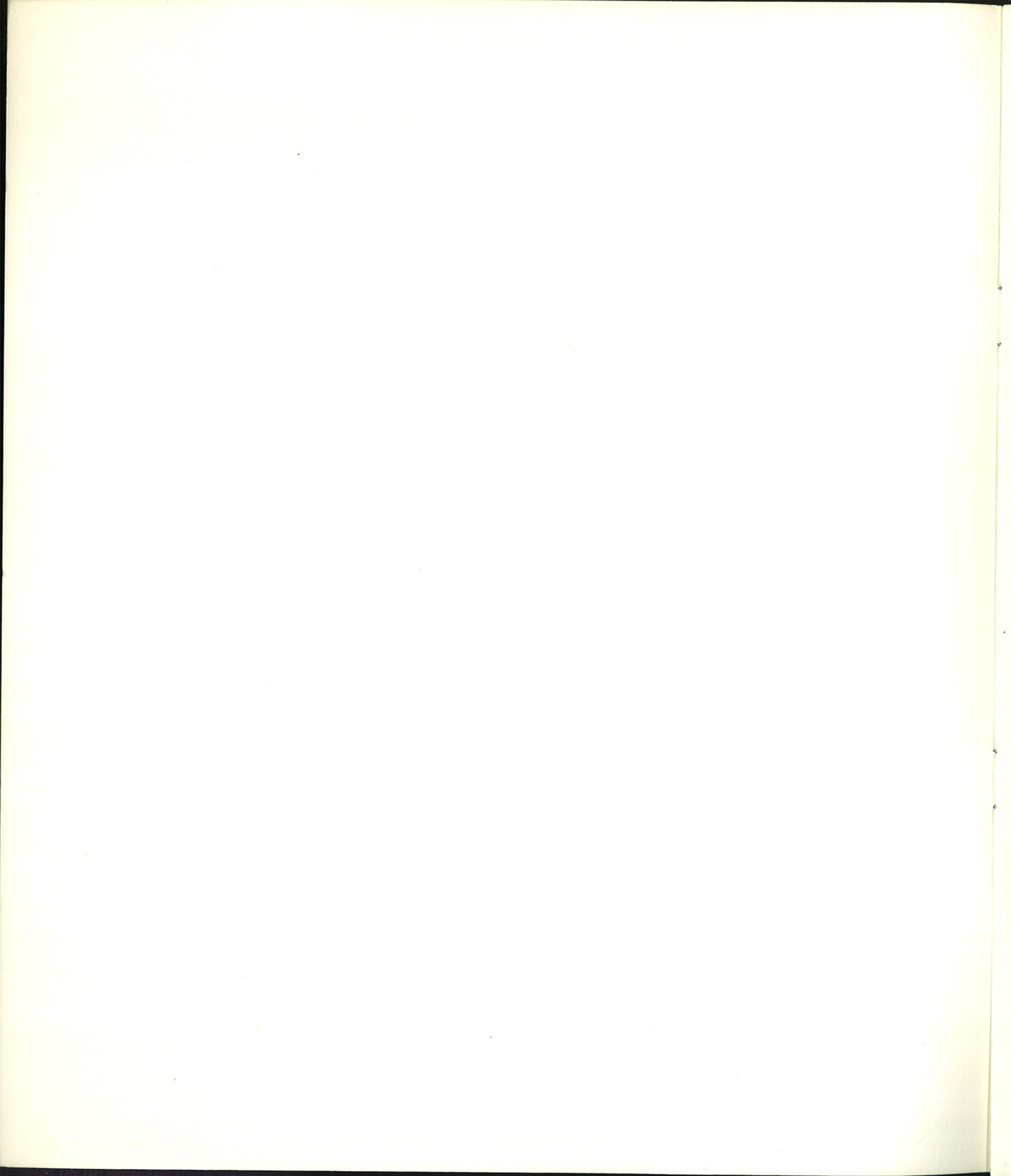


friedrich vordemberge-gildewart

retrospective 1924-1962



friedrich vordemberge-gildewart

retrospective september 15 - november 11, 1972

annely juda fine art

11 Tottenham Mews London W1P 9PJ Tel 01-580 7593

INTRODUCTION

Amidst the noise and bustle in the International Art Scene one fact emerges clearly: the greatest achievement until now in 20th century art is the breakthrough into the Non-Objective World. Vordemberge-Gildewart played a vital part in this achievement. But what role was his?

When he began work in Hanover, 1923, the vocabulary for a new language in art already existed. Kandinsky, the Dutch of the "STIJL" group, especially his friends Mondrian and van Doesburg—the Russian Constructivists—with whom he had contact through El Lissitzky also living in Hanover—they had already prepared the way. This meant that from elementary laws of form, colour, line, plane, matter and space one could develop an autonomous plastic reality in which form and content were one. The picture did not signify that which it was not. Vordemberge-Gildewart was one of the pioneers of this new reality. The remarkable thing about him was that from the very beginning he spoke this new language and belonged to this new world without ever looking back or being cautious. He was one of the first artists (and has stayed one of the few) who did not have to make the long way through abstraction into the non-objective. Already the earliest works show self-reliance in the use of the new vocabulary of geometric, constructivist art.

Characteristic is also that Vordemberge-Gildewart did not only stay faithful to his once chosen path, but followed it with admirable consequence. He could say of himself, that he never weakened, that he never succumbed to any modic trend, that he could never be accused of falling into any temptation or opportunistic degeneration. The loyalty to his own self and work could lead to the assumption that Vordemberge-Gildewart has restricted himself to one formula which he had evolved and that the exploration of its validity satisfied him. However, if one takes stock of the entire oeuvre which is not large and comprises 40 working years, one notices that Vordemberge-Gildewart advanced with great consequence and his work developed in an individual and original way.

It is clear from the beginning that it is not the elementary form which interested him, rather the relationship evolved from various juxtapositions. These can provoke but also release tensions. In the foreground always looms the question: what happens when . . . ? Each work, however, is a convincing answer to this constantly reformulated question. The conditions for the juxtaposition of form and line in the picture are also valid for the juxtaposition of form and space. These are apparent in the foreground of the early paintings. Added to the pictorial plane are elementary, stereometric bodies, wood, crescents, cones, pieces of frame which transform the picture into a relief and emphasise its architectural character.

He follows through the exploration of horizontals and verticals with the introduction of the diagonal. Herewith he departs from a static position and brings a dynamic element into the picture. By use of the

diagonal, the slanting line in general, he adds a new dimension to the work and the problem of balance takes on a new importance. And here begins the actual field of experiment for Vordemberge-Gildewart. Very soon he recognised that the slightest change could disturb the relationship of the pictorial elements, planes, wood, sticks, lines, etc. To find the unstable balance under continuous new formal conditions was his problem but also his talent. It has been said that the confrontation of coarse and fine elements (especially characteristic in the works of the 1930's) functions in the same way as a balancing stick for the tightrope walker. Thus one touches on the gay frivolity and playfulness in his compositions. Vordemberge-Gildewart spoke himself of the choreographic principle in the creation of a composition. This is especially applicable in those works which contain two similar triangles which overlap and float in space in fateful embrace.

Vordemberge-Gildewart formulated his language of form elements more and more precisely and refined the colours from primary three-tonal down to the subtlest tone. He attained a mastery in determining colour elements, which made him the authentic colour artist amongst the constructivist painters.

When he abandoned the use of three dimensional elements in the later work like halfmoons, etc., it does not mean that he foregoes the space dimension. At first lines or triangles appear above the frame like darts. The picture is regarded as an isolated phenomenon but as an art conglomeration of a wide circle of happenings and conditions. The picture becomes a key which opens vistas and insights . . . It can also mean the opposite, i.e. when the picture as though looking for protection retracts from the periphery into the centre.

In the late work stronger pictorial order is added to the graceful, playful, dancelike composition. Horizontal-vertical structures multiply themselves. The colour too becomes deeper and stronger. To say it with words of music which Vordemberge-Gildewart found suitable for his works: dark organ tones mixed with the lighthearted sound of chamber music. One can also see the basis of a musical composition in the order of "movements" in the paintings which show a more or less vertical or diagonal division of the paintings.

Vordemberge-Gildewart saw his work almost as a scientific experiment, in any case objective, clear, uncompromising, in which chance played no part. Nothing was created out of a momentary impulse, nothing out of personal emotion. Yet even so the work is a pure mirror of the personality of a man who sets order against the chaos of this world, sustained by the belief that elementary form and colour constellations are not only aesthetic games but can become exemplary models. His *Crede* could have been the word of Augustin: "Beauty is the radiation of Truth".

Willy Rotzler.
(translated from German)



Photograph by courtesy of Maywald, Paris

**WALL STREET.
FIRM CLOSE AFTER
IRREGULARITY.**

New York, Sunday.
Stocks opened in a
firm close after a
period of irregularity.
The market closed firm
and irregular. The
Government Paper and
Bonds market closed
firm and irregular.

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BIOGRAPHY

- 1899 Born 17th November in Osnabrück.
- 1918 Finished his apprenticeship as carpenter.
- 1919 Studied Hanover School of Art and Technical College (sculpture and interior design). First abstract reliefs. Worked in the studio of Professor Vierthaler on sculpture for architectural projects. Used former studio of El Lissitzky in the house of the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover.
- 1924 Formed the group "K" together with Hans Nitzschke. Met Kurt Schwitters, Hans Arp and Theo van Doesburg in Hanover. Member of "Der Sturm", Berlin, and "De Stijl", Leiden. Journey to London.
- 1925 Introductory lecture "The Absolute Film" at the showing of films by Richter, Eggeling, Leger, Picabia and Clair (organised by the Kestner-Gesellschaft). Extended visit to Paris on the occasion of the successful exhibition "L'Art d'aujourd'hui". Started publication of "raum-zeit-fläche" (space-time-plane).
- 1926 Participated in the international exhibition "Société Anonyme", Museum of Living Art, Brooklyn, New York.
- 1927 Founder member, together with Schwitters, Nitzschke and Buchheister of "The Abstracts", Hanover, a branch of the International Society of Expressionists, Futurists, Cubists and Constructivists (central office, Berlin). Participated in the exhibition at the Kunsthalle, Mannheim, "Ways and Directions of Abstract Painting in Europe".
- 1928 Represented in the Landesmuseum, Hanover, in "the Cabinet of the Abstracts" designed by El Lissitzky.
- 1930 Participated in the first international exhibition of "Cercle et carré", Paris.
- 1932 Founder member of "Abstraction-Création", Paris.
Married Ilse Leda.
- 1936-37 Berlin.
- 1937-38 Switzerland, mainly Zurich.
- 1938 Exhibition "Entartete Kunst", (degenerate art), Berlin.
- 1938-54 Amsterdam.
- 1939 Design of a mural for the Board Room of P.T.T. in The Hague—not executed due to World War II.
- 1940 Poetry "millimeter und geraden" (millimetres and straights), Amsterdam. Publisher of Arp "Rire de coquille", Amsterdam 1944, and Kandinsky "11 Tableaux, 7 Poemes" (11 paintings, 7 poems), Edition Duwaer, Amsterdam 1945.
- 1949 Participated in "les premiers maîtres de l'art abstrait", Galerie Maeght, Paris, organised by the Museum Grenoble. Monograph "Vordemberge - Gildewart" Edition Duwaer, Amsterdam.
- 1950 Design of the "Etalagen" for the store "De Bijenkorf", Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam.
- 1952 Invited to lecture on "colour as a space forming element in architecture" (Farbe als raumbildendes Element in der Architektur) at the Academie van beeldende Kunsten, Rotterdam.
- 1953 Prize at the 2nd Biennale, Sao Paulo.
- 1954 Member of the PEN-Club (The Netherlands). Invited to the "Hochschule für Gestaltung", Ulm lecturer in Visual Communication.
- 1955 Received the "Justus Möser-Medal" of Osnabrück. Elected one of the Rectors of the Hochschule, Ulm. Participated in the first Documenta—art of the XXth Century—Kassel.
- 1962 Died in Ulm.

ONE-MAN SHOWS

- 1929 Galerie Povolozky, Paris.
- 1934 Bragaglia fuori commercio, Rome.
Galleria Il Milione, Milan.
- 1938 Kunstzaal Kleykamp, The Hague.
- 1950 De Bijenkorf, Amsterdam.
- 1954 Ferdinand Möller, Cologne.
- 1955 Städtisches Museum und Kunstverein,
Ulm.
- 1957– Karl-Ernst-Osthaus-Museum, Hagen
59 Joseph Albers – Friedrich Vordem-
berge-Gildewart. Travelling exhibi-
tion Vordemberge-Gildewart: Pfalz-
galerie Kaiserslautern, Frankfurter
Kunstverein, Frankfurt/Main. Die
Insel, Hamburg, Kunstverein, Freiburg.
- 1963 Städtisches Museum, Ulm.
Kunstkabinett Klihm, München.
- 1965 Toninelli Arte Moderna, Milan.
Galleria del Levante, Rome.
Gemeentemuseum, The Hague.
Galerie d'Eendt, Amsterdam.
Galerie 58, Rapperswil.
- 1967 Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eind-
hoven.
Kunsthalle Basel (together with
Graeser and Danksin).
- 1968 Galerie im Hause Behr, Stuttgart.
- 1969 Städtisches Kunsthalle, Mannheim.
- 1970 Galerie Müller, Cologne.
Galerie Fürneisen-Dröscher, Hamburg.
Galerie Im Erker, St. Gallen.
Galerie 58, Rapperswil.
- 1971 La Boetie, New York.
Richard Feigen Gallery, Chicago.
- 1972 Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen.
Galleria Milano, Milan.
Annely Juda Fine Art, London.

GROUP SHOWS

(Selection of important group exhibitions)

- 1929 Kunsthaus Zurich: Abstract and
Surrealist Painting and Sculpture,
with Arp, Baumeister, Braque, Chiri-
co, Dali, Delaunay, van Doesburg,
Max Ernst, Freundlich, Magritte, Male-
vich, Man Ray, Masson, Meyer-
Amden, Miro, Moholy-Nagy, Ozenfant,
Pevsner, Picabia, Picasso, Gris,
Kandinsky, Klee, Leger, Lipschitz, El
Lissitzky, Schwitters, Severini, Tan-
guy, Vantongerloo, etc.
- 1931 Museum Historiji i Sztuki, Lodz:
Collection Internationale d'Art Nou-
veau with Arp, Baumeister, Calder,
Charchoune, Sonia Delaunay, Max
Ernst, van Doesburg, Gleizes, Gorin,
Helion, Herbin, Huszar, Leger, Lurcat,
Picasso, Marcoussis, Ozenfant, Pram-
polini, Seligmann, Schwitters, Sta-
zewski, Strzeminski, Täuber-Arp,
Vantongerloo, Werkman.
- 1937 Kunsthalle Basle: Constructivists,
van Doesburg, El Lissitzky, Tatlin,
Malevich, van der Leek, Mondrian,
Helion, Gorin, Calder, Eggeling,
Richter, Rodchenko, Vantongerloo,
Dexel, Baumeister, Kandinsky, Picas-
so, Schwitters, Stazewski, Freund-
lich, Klee, Strzeminski, Domela,
Pevsner, Gabo, Moholy-Nagy, Täuber-
Arp.
Brunn, Künstlerhaus: Paul Citroen,
Filla, Dufy, Max Ernst, Chagall, Chiri-
co, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka,
Leger, Masson, Moholy-Nagy, Ozen-
fant, Picasso, Rouault, Utrillo,
Vlaminck, etc.
- 1938 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam: Ab-
stract Art.
New Burlington Gallery, London:
Modern German Art.
- 1939 The Solomon R. Guggenheim Collec-
tion of Non-Objective Paintings,
Baltimore/Maryland.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation,
New York: Art of Tomorrow.
- 1944 Kunsthalle Basle: Concrete Art.

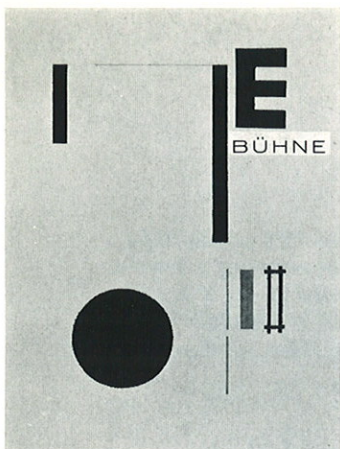
- 1946 Palais des Beaux Arts de la Ville de Paris : Art Abstrait Concret Constructivisme Non Figuratif.
- 1947 Palazzo Exreale, Milan : Arte astratta e concreta.
- 1948 Collection Peggy Guggenheim, XXIV Biennale, Venice.
- 1949 Museum of Non-Objective Painting : European Painters.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation : Otto Nebel, Vordemberge-Gildewart, Lotte Konnerth, Hannes Beckmann.
Palazzo Strozzi, Florence : Collection Peggy Guggenheim.
- 1951 Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Kunsthaus, Zurich : Surrealism + Abstraction, Collection Peggy Guggenheim.
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam : De Stijl.
- 1952 XXVI Biennale, Venice : De Stijl 1917-1932.
Museum of Modern Art, New York : De Stijl 1917-1928.
- 1956 Kunsthaus Zurich : Albers, Glarner, Vordemberge-Gildewart.
- 1957 Tate Gallery, London : Paintings from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.
Kunstmuseum St. Gallen : Painting poets—poetic painters.
Gemeentemuseum, The Hague : Paintings from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, also Atheneum, Helsinki, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Wallraf Richartz Museum, Cologne.
- 1960 Helmhaus Zurich : Concrete Art—50 Years Development.
- 1963 Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam : International Avantgarde 1927-1929.
- 1964 Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York : Mondrian, de Stijl and Their Impact.
Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund : de Stijl.
Kunstverein Ulm : 13 Concrete Artists.
- 1966 Kunstverein Frankfurt : Constructivist Painting 1915-1930.
- 1967 Kunsthaus Zurich : Spectrum of Colour from a private collection, Zurich.
Kunstmuseum Basle : Collection of Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach also St. Gallen.
- 1968 Camden Arts Centre, London : De Stijl.
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo : Plus by Minus : Today's Half-Century.
Kunstverein Frankfurt : 60 Years Collages.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York : Acquisitions of the 1930's and 1940's.
Kunstgewerbemuseum Zurich : The History of Collage.
- 1970 L'Ancienne Douane, Strasbourg : L'Art en Europe Autour de 1925.
Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo : Collection Marguerite Arp-Hagenbach.
Annely Juda Fine Art, London : The Non-Objective World 1914-1924.
- 1971 Universitat Amsterdam Kunsthistorisch Instituut : Beckmann, Vordemberge-Gildewart, Fiedler.
Annely Juda Fine Art, London : The Non-Objective World 1924-1939.
- 1972 Annely Juda Fine Art, London : The Non-Objective World 1939-1955.

We wish to thank Mrs. Ilse Vordemberge-Leda for her assistance in making this exhibition possible, and the publishers Dumont Schauberg for their generous loan of blocks.

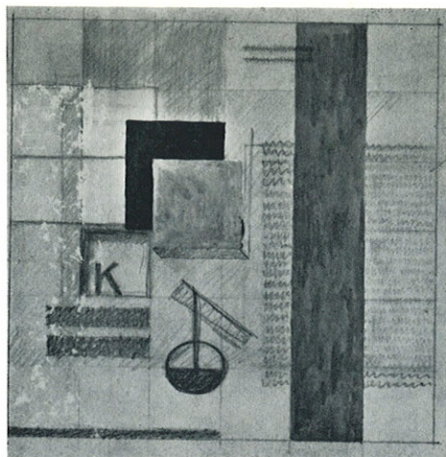
LIST OF WORKS

- 1 Construction with Wall Street 1924
oil and paper on cardboard
16 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. 41 x 34 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 4
- 2 Construction No. 8 (mit Reisschiene) 1924
oil on wood (front cover)
25 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 65 x 85 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 11
- 3 Construction No. 11 1924
collage : E. Bühne
15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 40 x 30 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 14
- 4 Drehscheibe 1924
sketch for a stage design
watercolour on paper
12 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 32.6 x 24.9 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 5 Sketch with "K" 1924
watercolour on paper
14 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. 39.7 x 33.8 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 6 Composition No. 47 1926
paper and lace on cardboard
21 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. 54 x 44 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 51
- 7 Composition No. 35 1927
oil on canvas with mounted wooden ball
10 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 26 x 40 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 38
- 8 Composition No. 38a 1927
collage : Equilibre
paper on paper
16 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. 41 x 34 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 42
- 9 Composition No. 48 1928
collage : Architektur . . . keine optische Wertung
14 x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. 35.5 x 26 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 52
- 10 Composition No. 49 1928
photo drawing, paper on cardboard
13 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. 34 x 24.5 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 53
- 11 Photomontage with Object No. 4 1928
paper on paper
16 x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. 40.5 x 30 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 12 Photomontage with Object No. 5 1928
paper on paper
16 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 40.8 x 34.2 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 13 Photomontage with Object No. 7 1928
paper on paper
15 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. 40.2 x 28.8 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 14 Composition No. 60 1931
oil on canvas
18 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. 46 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 64
- 15 Composition No. 69 1931/32
oil on canvas
14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 37 x 37 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 73
- 16 Composition No. 77 1933
oil on canvas with mounted wood element
13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 35 x 35 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 81
- 17 Composition No. 94 1935
oil on canvas
39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 100 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 98
- 18 Composition No. 98 1935
oil on canvas
23 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. 60 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 102
- 19 Composition No. 101 1935
oil on canvas
23 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. 60 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 105
- 20 Composition No. 109 Zurich 1938
oil on canvas
31 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. 80 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 113
- 21 Composition No. 115 1939/40
oil on canvas
31 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. 80 x 100 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 120
- 22 Composition No. 119 1940
oil on canvas
43 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 57 in. 110 x 145 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 124

- 23 Composition No. 124 1941
oil on canvas
31½ x 23⅝ in. 80 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 129
- 24 Composition No. 129 1941
oil on canvas
57 x 43¼ in. 145 x 110 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 134
- 25 Composition No. 132 1942
oil on canvas
39⅝ x 31½ in. 100 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 137
- 26 Composition No. 139 1942/43
oil on canvas
39⅝ x 31½ in. 100 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 144
- 27 Composition No. 141 1942/43
oil on canvas
23⅝ x 31½ in. 60 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 146
- 28 Composition No. 145 1944
oil on canvas
23⅝ x 31½ in. 60 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 150
- 29 Composition No. 153 1946
oil on canvas
47¼ x 31½ in. 120 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 158
- 30 Composition No. 156 1946
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 23⅝ in. 50 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 161
- 31 Composition No. 164 1947
oil on canvas
39⅝ x 39⅝ in. 100 x 100 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 169
- 32 Collee Schwarz auf Schwarz 1947
paper on paper
13 x 9⅝ in. 33 x 24.5 cm.
oeuvre cat. addition
- 33 Composition No. 174 1948
oil on canvas
23⅝ x 31½ in. 60 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 179
- 34 Composition No. 175 1948
triptych, oil on canvas
centre piece with string
23⅝ x 41 in. 60 x 104 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 180
- 35 Composition No. 182 1951
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 23⅝ in. 50 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 187
- 36 Composition No. 186 1951/52
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 27½ in. 50 x 70 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 191
- 37 Composition No. 187 1952
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 27½ in. 50 x 70 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 192
- 38 Composition No. 198 1953
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 19⅝ in. 50 x 50 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 203
- 39 Composition No. 202 1954
oil on canvas
13 x 19⅝ in. 33 x 50 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 207
- 40 Composition No. 206 1955/56
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 23⅝ in. 50 x 60 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 211
- 41 Composition No. 207 1957
oil on canvas
39⅝ x 51½ in. 100 x 130 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 212
- 42 Composition No. 212 1959/60
oil on canvas
41⅝ x 31½ in. 105 x 80 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 217
- 43 Composition No. 222 1962
oil on canvas
19⅝ x 19⅝ in. 50.5 x 50 cm.
oeuvre cat. no. 227
- 10 sketches for paintings
1 page with seven pencil sketches
2 pages each with nine pencil sketches



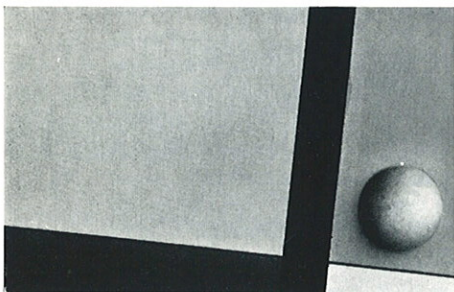
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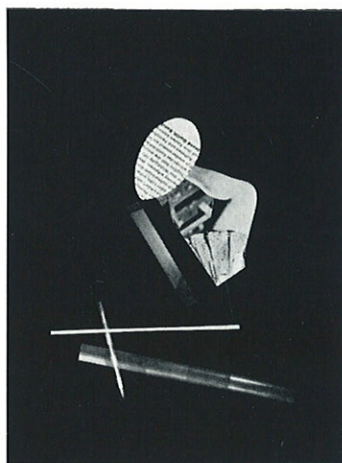
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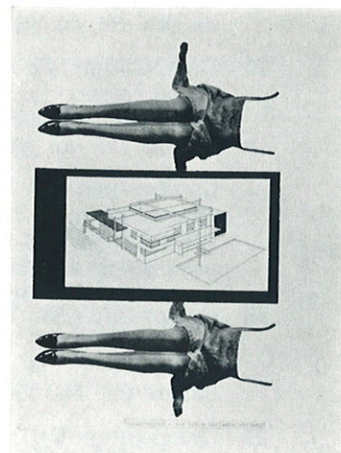
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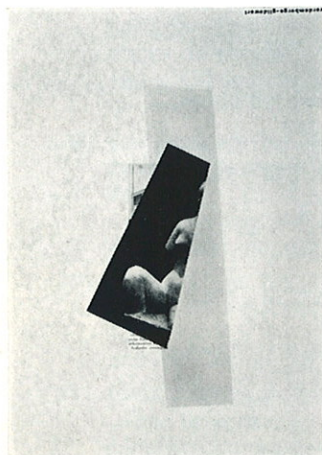
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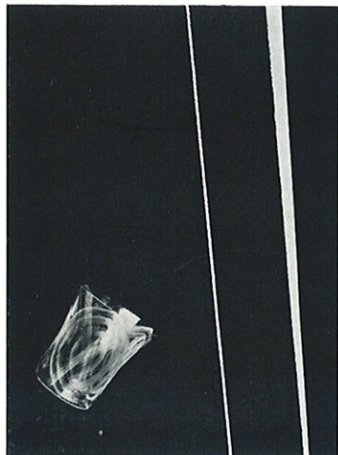
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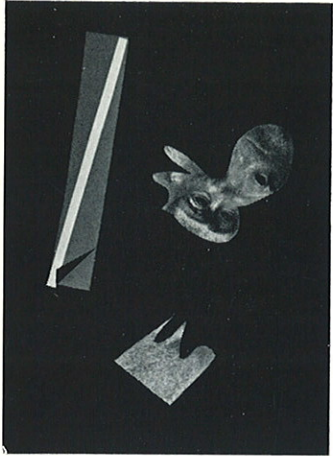
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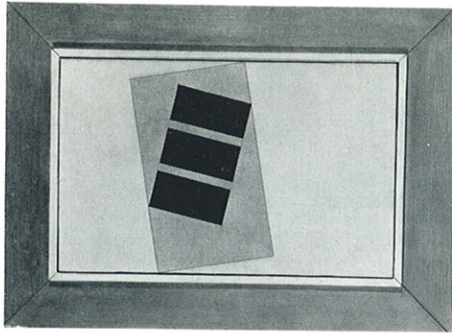
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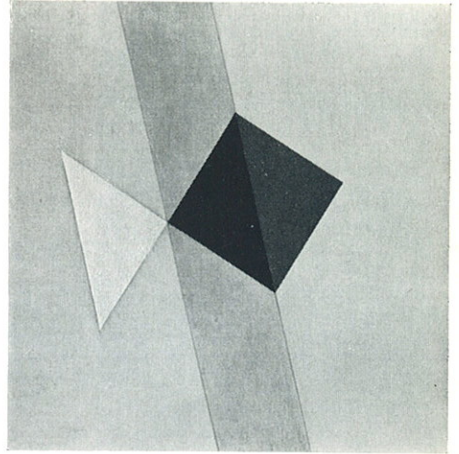
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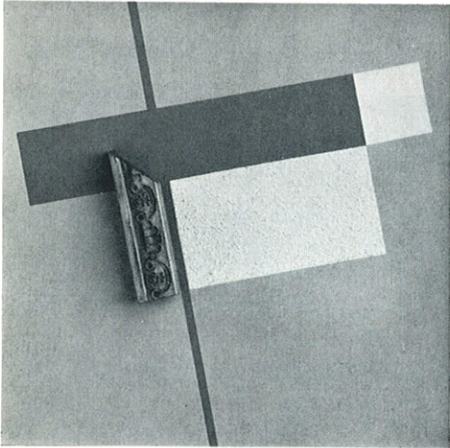
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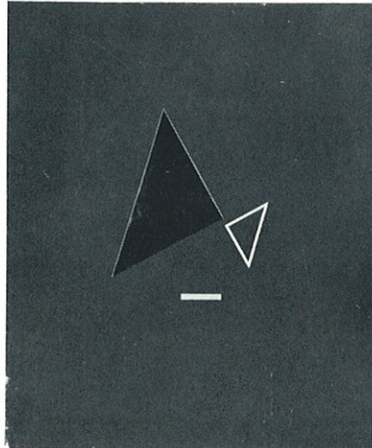
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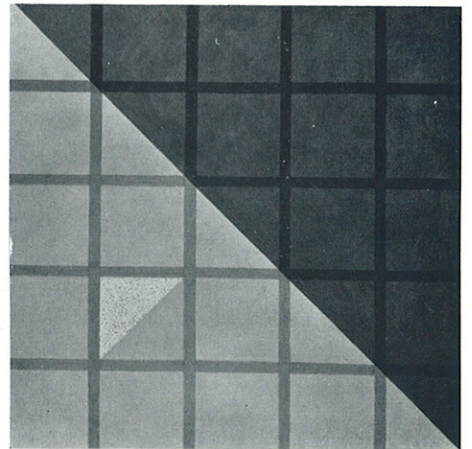
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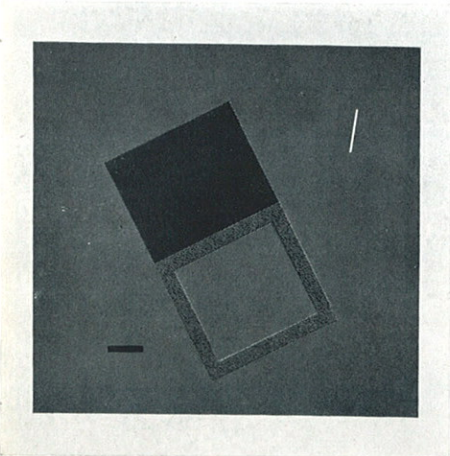
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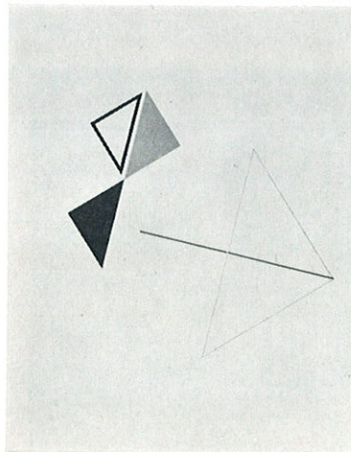
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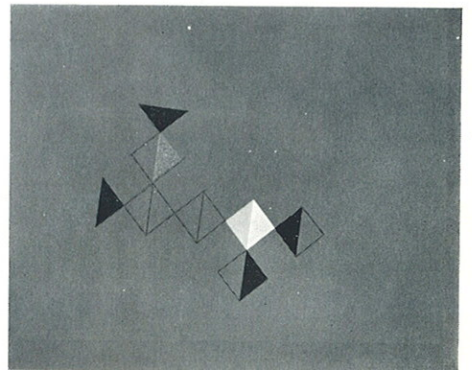
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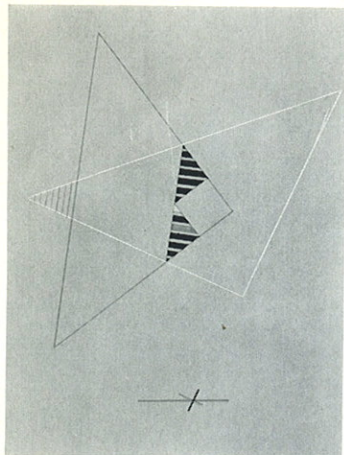
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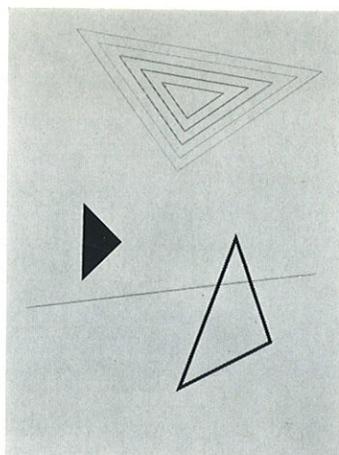
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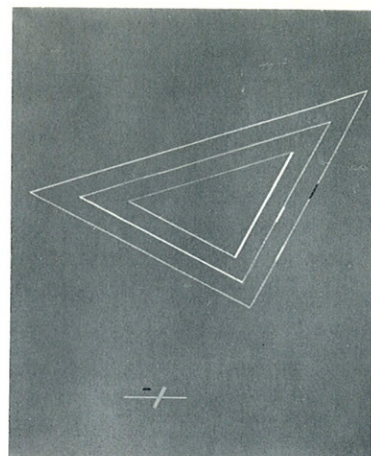
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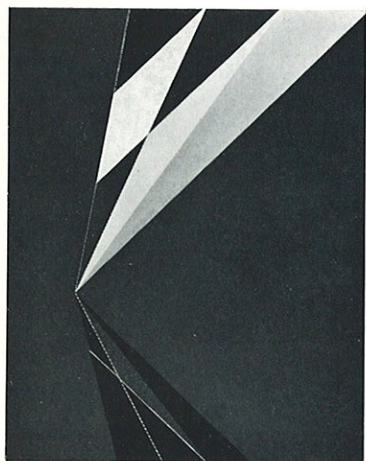
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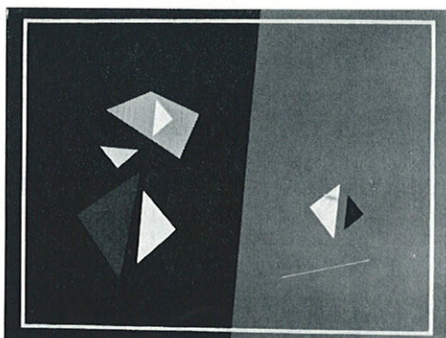
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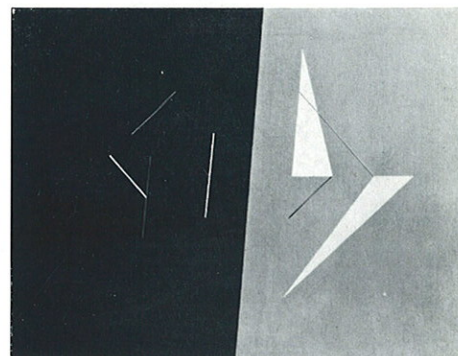
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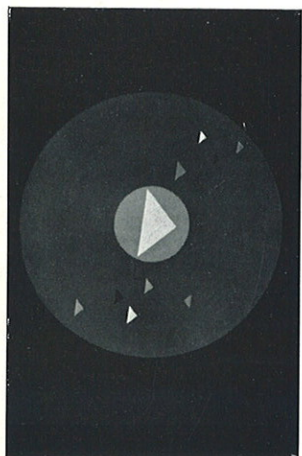
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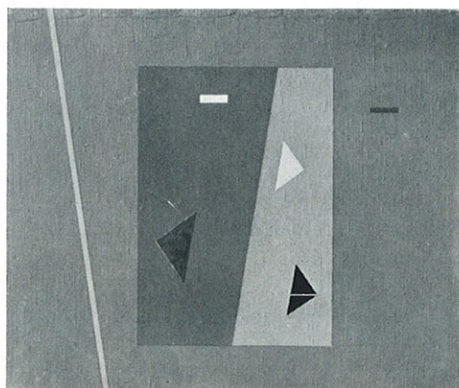
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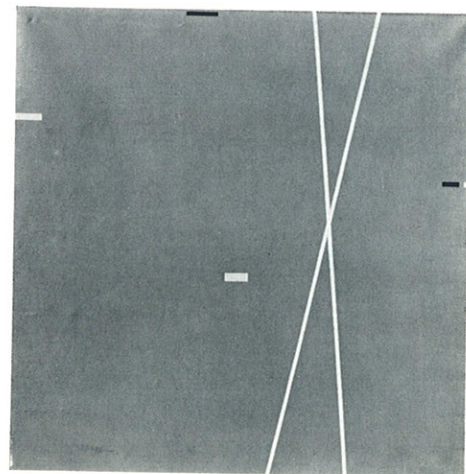
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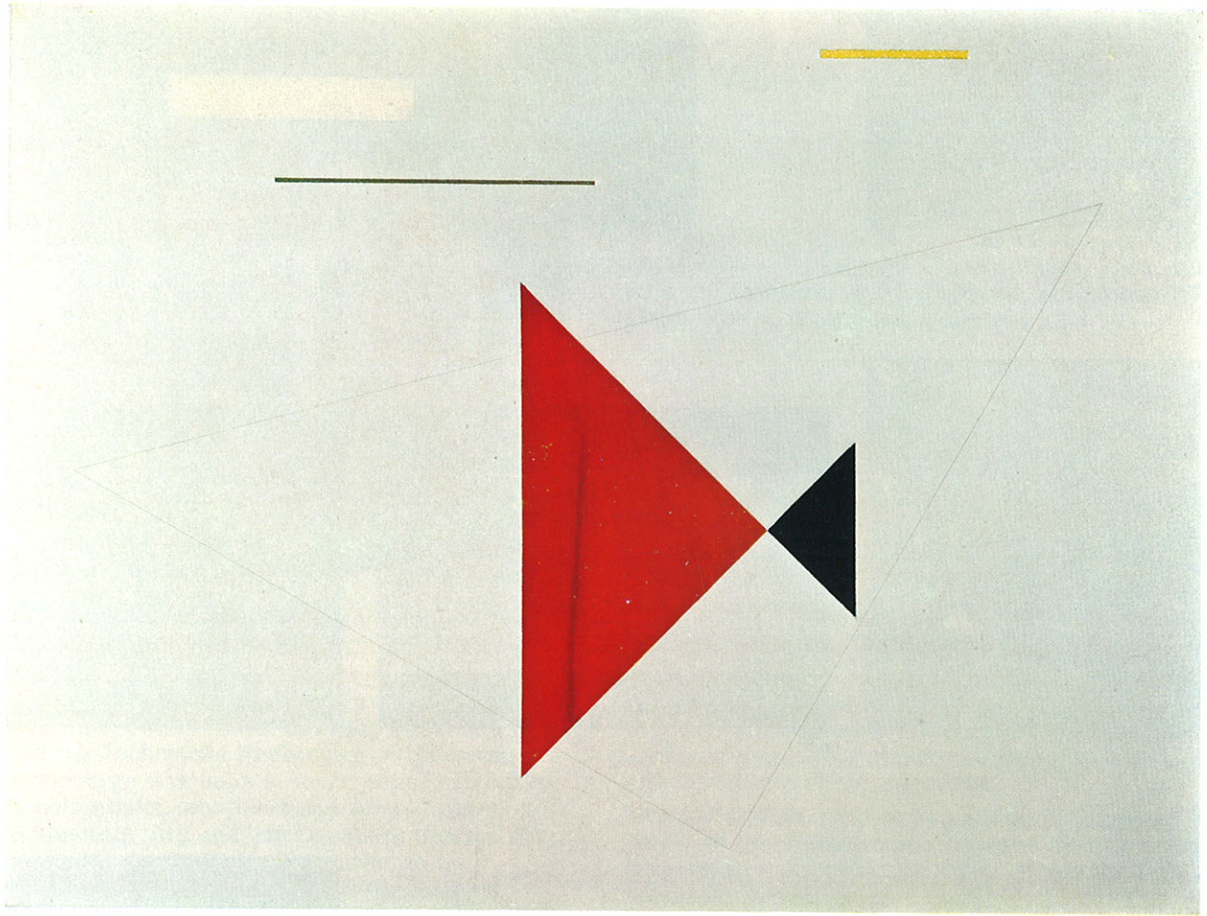
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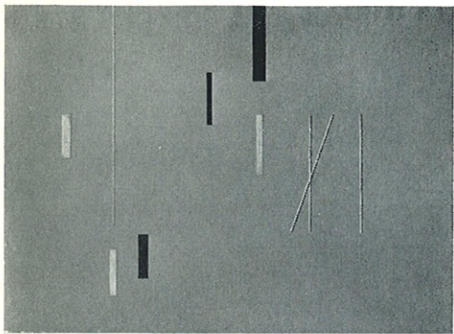


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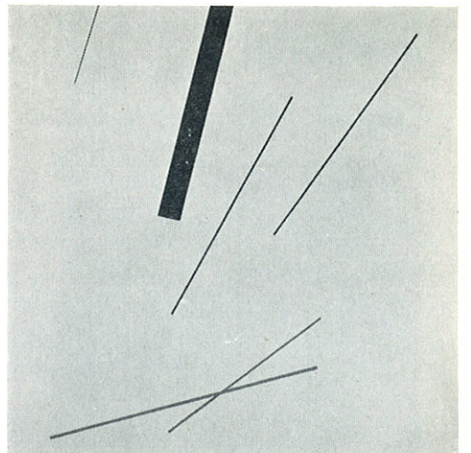
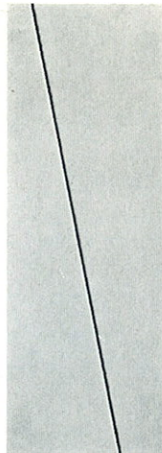


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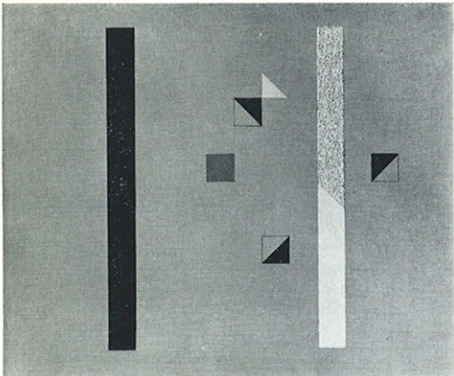




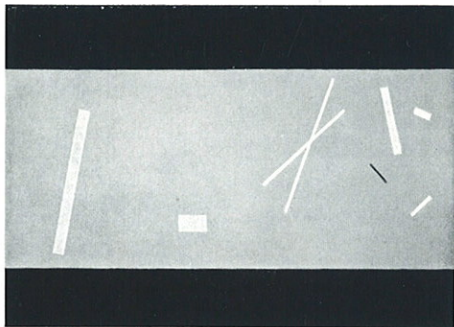
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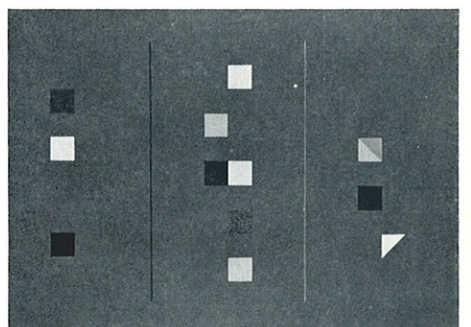
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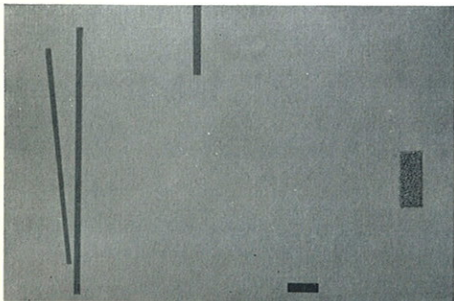
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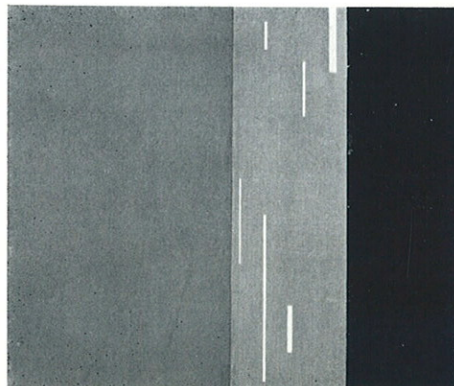
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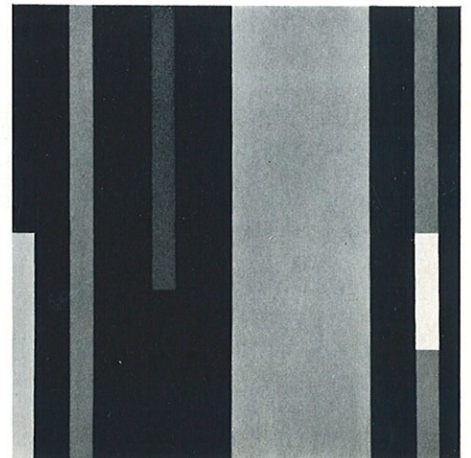
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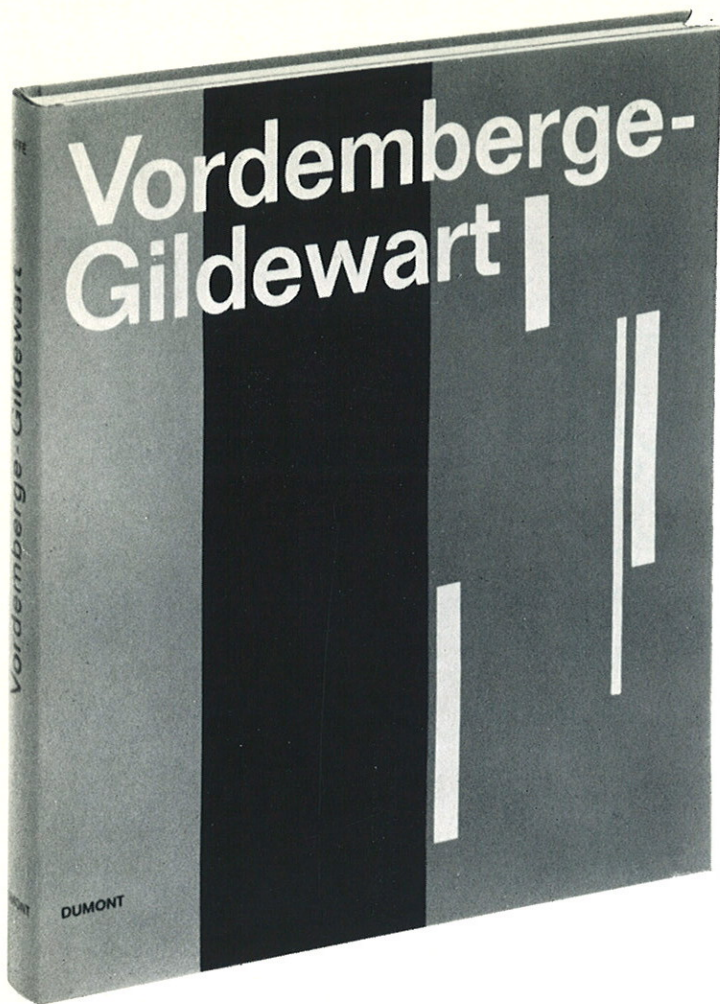
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Comprehensive Monograph
with complete Oeuvre catalogue
published by M. DuMont Schauberg

Hans L. C. Jaffé

VORDEMBERGE-GILDEWART

The Man and His Work

142 pages with 25 hand-mounted colour plates, 20 black and white plates, 4 drawings, 6 photographs. Oeuvre catalogue with 255 numbers, 241 reproduced, exhibitions, 1971. Linen with multi-coloured dustcover, DM 78,—.

"Die subtilsten seiner Bilder lassen sich mit Mozart-Divertimentis vergleichen; der Kunsthistoriker Jaffé hat jetzt eine Harmonielehre dazu geschrieben. H. Neidel"
Du, Zürich.

"Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart was born at Osnabrück in 1899 and died at Ulm in 1962. After studying architecture and sculpture at the Technische Hochschule in Hannover (1919-24), Vordemberge was soon in touch with El Lissitzky, the Russian Constructivist, who lived and worked there, as well as with Schwitters, Arp and van Doesburg through the Kestner-Gesellschaft. Vordemberge thus came to be associated with De Stijl, and later with the Abstraction-Création movement in Paris. In 1938 he settled in Amsterdam, and in 1954 was appointed Professor at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm.

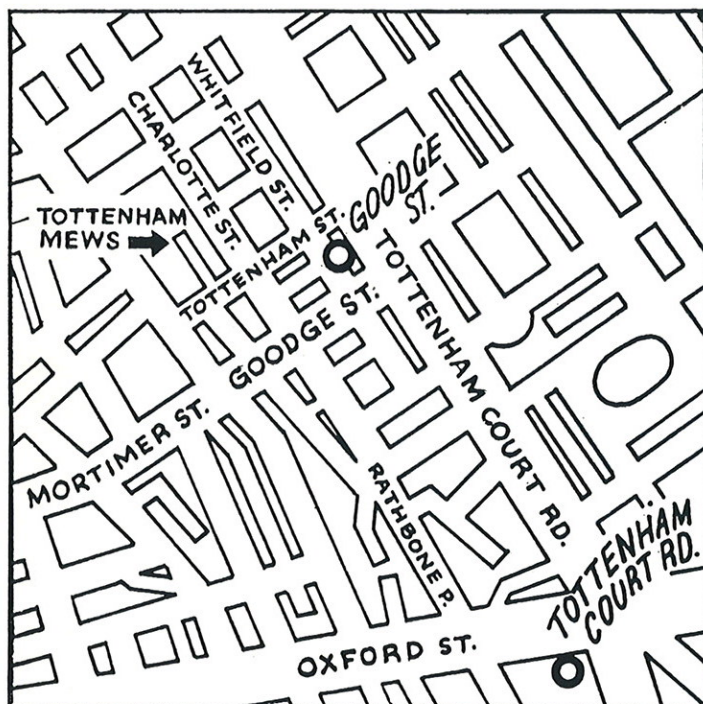
As Hans L. C. Jaffé points out, Vordemberge was one of the first artists of this century who accepted from the start, and always remained true to, the limited abstract pictorial language of circles, triangles and squares. His rather tasteful and barren work is wholly devoid of charm, fun, emotionalism or chance effects. Every composition was

precisely calculated in terms of formal relationships, intervals and angles, Vordemberge's expressed aim being to achieve—and in this respect he was a pioneer—a maximum effect with the minimum means.

This monograph, written by a close friend, gives full biographical information and discusses the artist's ideas and theories in economical language. Professor Jaffé also discusses Vordemberge's relationships to other artists of the abstract school, both contemporaries and those of a younger generation. The volume contains a fully illustrated catalogue raisonné, based on the artist's own manuscript draft, which runs to 227 entries. Thirty more, which he overlooked, are also included. The volume is illustrated with twenty-five colour plates, sixteen large monochrome reproductions of paintings (reproduced again in the catalogue) and a further four pages of documentary photographs."

—Times Literary Supplement, London.

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