

Who is Piet Mondrian?

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Who Are They?

Squares, straight lines...and dance moves! Explore the abstract art of Piet Mondrian

Piet Mondrian is a Dutch artist best known for his abstract paintings. Art that is abstract does not show things that are recognisable such as people, objects or landscapes. Instead artists use colours, shapes and textures to achieve their effect

As well as abstract art Mondrian was also passionate about dancing! Apparently he didn't like slow traditional dances like waltzes or tango, but enjoyed high energy, fast dancing styles! He even called one of his abstract paintings *Broadway Boogie Woogie* after a popular dance of the time.

When Mondrian made his paintings, he would always mix his own colours, never using the paint directly out of a tube. He often used primary colours – red yellow and blue – as in this painting.

Mondrian did not use a ruler to measure out his lines! He thought carefully about where to place the lines, like those that you see in this painting. Notice how the red, yellow and blue are placed to the side and the centre of painting doesn't have any colour. Mondrian often used colour and composition in this way. (A composition is the arrangement of shapes and images in a picture).

Although he is best known for his abstract paintings made from squares and rectangles, Piet Mondrian started out painting realistic scenes. He especially liked painting trees.

Can you see the shape of a tree in this painting? It shows how he began to develop his abstract style. The trunk and branches of the tree have become a network of horizontal and vertical lines.

In the early 19th century, Paris was the place where all the exciting new art was happening and Mondrian felt he had to go there. He took a big risk for his art. He left behind his home in the Netherlands in 1911 and the woman he was going to marry, to pursue his career as an artist in Paris.

This is the Piet Mondrian in his Paris studio.

The risk paid off. Mondrian became an important artist whose ideas and work influenced lots of later artists. In fact it wasn't just art that Mondrian inspired. The influence of his paintings can be seen in lots of other

things – from furniture to fashion!