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Sornsita Aimprasittichai

Kazimir Malevich

1,000 words

Started from the origin of human beings, human had nothing. Everything they have nowadays is created from their capability, imagination, ambition, intelligence, and many more factors. They create things beyond description again and again in order to fulfill their need of well-being and comfort. They keep improving their inventions to be better and better to maximize their utility. Hence, inventions become more complex and complicated. They have many big changes several times in both appearance and function. But although humans love technology, innovation, or any other hi-tech creations; in the deepest part of all human's heart, they still long for the simplest lives. Since birth, humans have tried very hard hoping to get everything they long for; but when they get them all, they feel nothing. Why? Because those things mean nothing; they are just something that make your life become more colorful and lively but these things do not last long. This idea may seem very strange but it really does exist. One outstanding representation about this idea is through art. In the beginning of 1900s, a new kind of art form was established. The person who played a major role in an occurrence of this art form, Suprematism, was Kazimir Malevich. Malevich paid no attention to any objects or components in his art work because he thought that those were nothing and meaningless. Hence, his works were very simple, so simple

even some kids can definitely copy his works. But if those paintings were really common why Malevich was considered as one of the greatest artists at that time?

Therefore, the interesting thing was how Kazimir Malevich made such simple paintings became interesting and remarkable.

Kazimir Malevich was born on February 23, 1879 in Kiev, a part of Russian Empire. His father, Seweryn, was a manager of sugar factory so his family had to move very often in order to seek for better place to grow sugar cane. When he was young, he lived in the rural area far from the centers of civilization. He knew nothing about professional art or culture. But fortunately, he was unintentionally surrounded by peasant art; this accidentally made him decided to study at the Moscow school of Painting, Sculpture, and, Architecture.¹ Since he had entered into the professional art world, he had a chance to view many well-known artists' works and was influenced by those artists' technics. But the most influenced artist for Kazimir Malevich to develop his style at that time was Natalia Goncharova, a Russian avant-garde painter who was deeply interested in Russian folk, which was the same interest with Malevich.² However, there was a great change in his art style when he had a chance to work as a stage-set for the opera, *Victory after the sun*, which gave him a great success and also made him to establish a new kind of art which called Suprematism.³

The real cause why Kazimir Malevich developed the idea about Suprematism was not clearly defined. There were two assumptions about the origin of

¹Organization creators. "Kazimir Malevich Biography." *Kazimir Malevich - The complete works*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.kazimir-malevich.org/biography.html>>.

²"Kazimir Malevich – Russiapedia Art Prominent Russians." *Get Russianalized – Russiapedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Feb. 2013. <<http://russiapedia.rt.com/prominent-russians/art/kazimir-malevich/>>.

³Miller, Katrin Bettina. "Kasimir Malevich - an introduction." *Kasimir Malewitsch – Suprematism*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Dec. 2002. <www.db-artmag.com/archiv/06/e/thema-malewitsch.html>.

Suprematism. The first one was Suprematist style which was created when he drew a big black square on a huge white curtain for the opera show. This image later was one of his most famous works, *Black Square*.⁴ The second one was on one of the clothes for the opera actors had a print of a black square divided into black and white triangles.⁵ However, the core concept of Suprematism was that objects shown in an image were meaningless, but the feeling instead was the most important and significant thing.⁶ Therefore, suprematist works are mostly composed of simple geometric shapes such as square or circle. Also the most often used color tone in the works was simple. There was no shading and there were only 1 or 2 color in one work. The style was unlike other artists at that time.

The concept of Suprematism sounds very simple and extremely interesting. But why Suprematism was very popular at that time or it can even be said that Suprematism made such a great change in art society in 1900s? The answer is Malevich did not give the worth of his paintings in the shapes, color or any component of the pictures like other artists did. But the feeling when the audiences look at the paintings is what he would like people to value his works. One of his most well-known paintings, *Black Square*, can be a good example of Malevich's thought. When he finished painting *Black Square* he put this picture in an extremely great location that can alter a simple painting into a meaningful one. The place where he put

⁴ Eeckhout, Tanguy. "Previous - Johnen Galerie Berlin." *Home - Johnen Galerie Berlin*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.johnengalerie.de/en/exhibitions>

⁵ Wikipedia contributors. "Suprematism." *Wikipedia, The Free*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Dec. 2006. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suprematism#section_3>.

⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "Suprematism." *Wikipedia, The Free*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Dec. 2006. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suprematism#section_1>.

his work was in the corner of the room. This may sound very strange—why would a corner of the room be a great location? Because in Russian tradition, every house had Jesus sculpture stood there in the corner of the room and when Malevich put his painting in the corner it seemed like this painting was absolutely marvelous even Jesus had to look at it. Malevich was ingenious to choose the best place to represent his simple Suprematist work.⁷

From the content above, it showed that Kazimir Malevich was not just a painter or a great artist but he was also a great philosopher. He combined professional art and philosophy together and made such a common painting become meaningful. He made ordinary things to become prominent by just changing thoughts and views. Changing the thought about one plain black square on white paper into a great work even the god had to stare. Changing the idea that superb paintings did not need to have such gorgeous components or plenty of details; the only thing that would make any painting become a great painting is the feeling when audiences look at it. It was such an amazing thing that these ideas were created by only one person, especially a person who once knew nothing about art. How marvelous you were, Kazimir Malevich.

⁷ Gray, Camilla. "Suprematism Movement, Artists and Major Works | The Art Story." *The Art Story: Modern Art Movements, Artists, Ideas and Topics*. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Feb. 2013. <<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-suprematism.htm>>.