

This is a chapter in piero scaruffi's "A Visual History of the Visual Arts": <http://www.scaruffi.com/art/history>

# The Modernist Age

- Bauhaus, Weimer (1919-24)
  - Walter Gropius (1883, Germany)
  - Marriage of art and craft (Gropius 1919)
  - Marriage of art and technology (Moholy-Nagy 1923, *“the machine is the spirit of this century”*)
  - Utopian goal of a spiritual society
  - Inspired by the collective total creativity of the Gothic cathedrals



Joost Schmidt:  
Poster for the 1923  
Bauhaus Exhibition



Wilhelm Wagenfeld (1900, Germany): Table lamp (1924)

# The Modernist Age

- Bauhaus, Weimer (1919-24)
  - László Moholy-Nagy (1895, Hungary)
    - Film,
    - Painting,
    - photogram (camera-less photography),
    - Kinetic sculpture,
    - poster,
    - Photomontage ("photoplastic"),
    - Etc
    - Creative photography is superior to painting



# The Modernist Age

- **Bauhaus, Dessau (1925-32)**
  - 1926: “Bauhaus” magazine
  - No distinction between applied and fine art
  - Constructivism + De Stijl
  - Product design, steel furniture, architecture, visual communications (graphic design, poster)
  - Design as a vehicle to change the world

Marcel Breuer (1902, Hungary): tubular steel Wassily Chair (1925)



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886, Germany):  
“MR Chair” (1927)

# The Modernist Age

- **Bauhaus, Dessau (1925-32)**

*for the future  
the bauhaus gave us assurance  
in facing the perplexities  
of work;  
it gave us the know-how to  
work,  
a foundation in the crafts,  
an invaluable heritage of timeless principles  
as applied to the  
creative process.  
it expressed again that we are  
not to impose aesthetics  
on the things we use, to the  
structures we live in,  
but that purpose and form must  
be seen as one.*

*that direction emerges when one  
considers  
concrete demands,  
special conditions, inherent  
character  
of a given problem,  
but never losing perspective  
that one is, after all,  
an artist,  
the bauhaus existed for a short  
span of time  
but the potentials,  
inherent in its principles  
have only begun to be realized,  
its sources of design remain  
forever full  
of changing possibilities.*

Herbert Bayer (1961)

# The Modernist Age

- **Art as visual communication**
  - **De Stijl (Holland) + Constructivism (Russia) + Bauhaus (Germany)**
  - **Giving a visual representation to the mood of a rational scientific century**
  - **The arts become a means of communication**
  - **Birth of graphic design as an independent discipline**

# The Modernist Age

- New Objectivity (social realism in Germany)
  - Reaction against Expressionism and Dada
  - Return to figuration
  - Veristic painters: Max Beckmann, George Grosz, Otto Dix, Heinrich Maria Davringhausen (1894)
  - Franz Roh's book "Post-Impressionism - Magic Realism" (1925)



# The Modernist Age

- New Objectivity: universal bestiality



Dix: "Trench" (1923)

Beckmann: "Night" (1919)





# The Modernist Age

- New Objectivity (social realism in Germany)
  - George Grosz (1893, Germany)

“The Agitator” (1928)



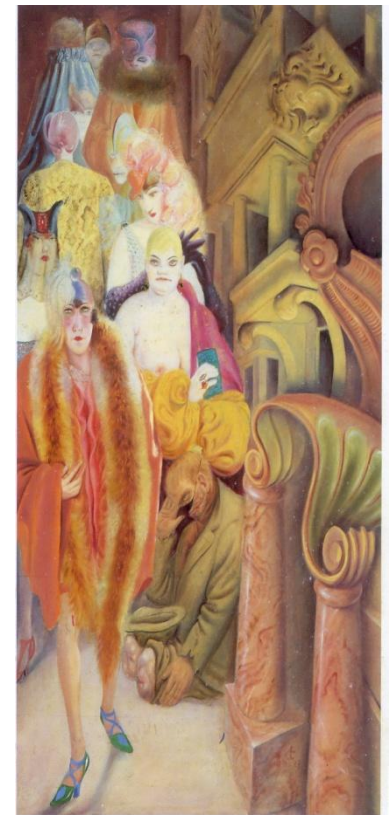
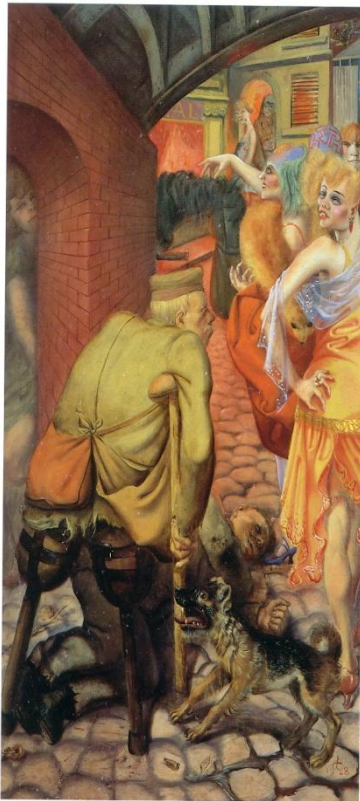
“Metropolis” (1917)





# The Modernist Age

- New Objectivity
  - Otto Dix



“Metropolis” (1928), a three-part representation of German society in the 1920s, from misery to decadence

# The Modernist Age

- New Objectivity
  - Christian Schad (1894, Germany)



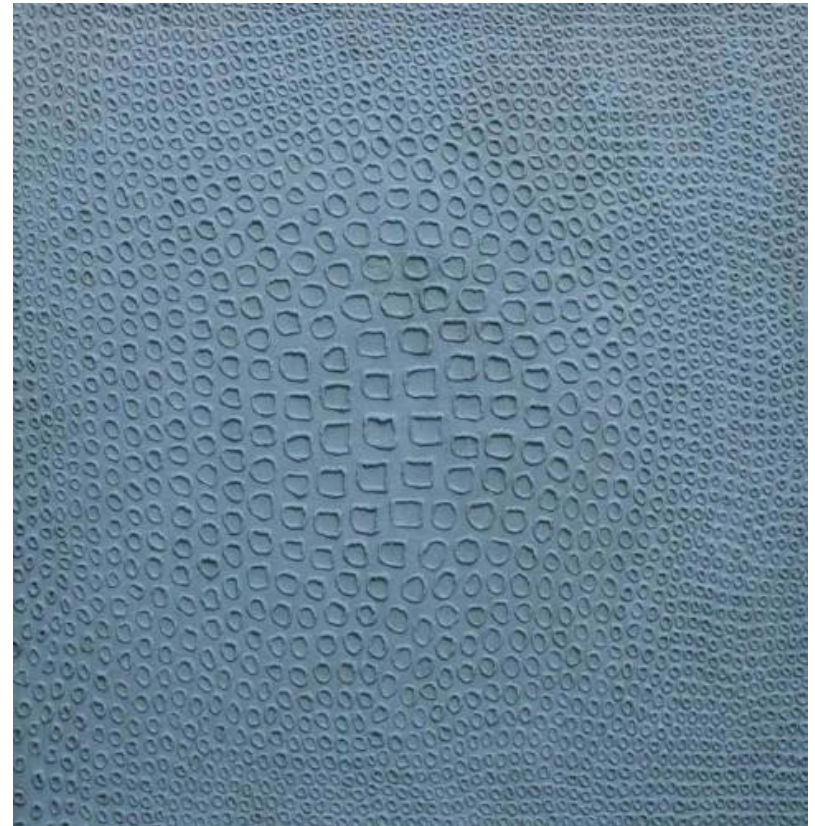
“Two Girls” (1928)

# The Modernist Age

- Unism
  - Wladyslaw Strzeminski (1893, Poland)



"Architectonic Composition 9c" (1929)



"Composition Unistic" (1934)



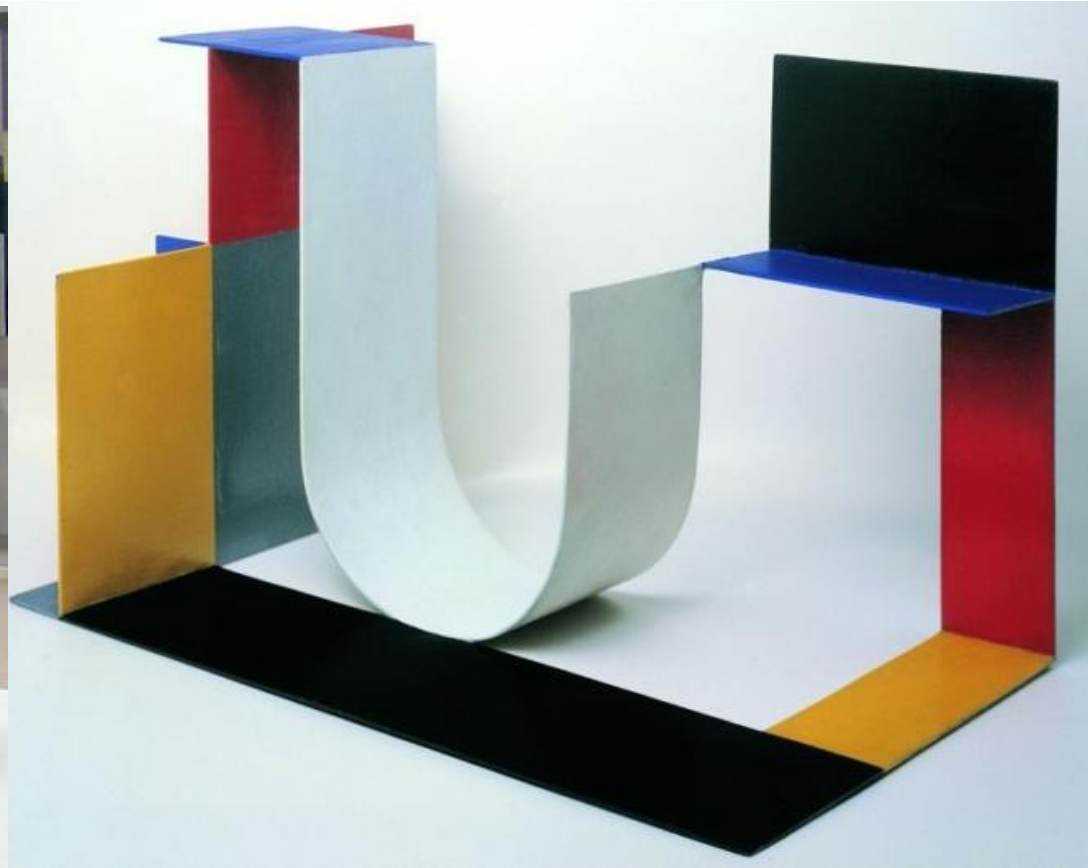
# The Modernist Age

- Unism
  - Katarzyna Kobro (1898, Poland)

"Spacial Composition" (1928)



"Spacial Composition #4" (1929)



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