

The true value of oppositions in life and art. //

Good and evil – the two principle oppositions of life – all /  
the world knows them, all the world suffers or is happy on /  
account of one or the other of them. But all the world is /  
not aware of the true value of this opposition, and in ge- /  
neral does not even see the necessity of them : one de- /  
mands good, escaping, if possible, from evil. //

By intuition, man wants good, unity, poise, especially /  
for himself. It is thus that he falls back into the search /  
for false ease and static equilibrium, which is con- /  
trary to the dynamic equilibrium of ⟨– th⟩ true life. /  
He is selfsatisfied with false unity and in searching /  
for this he obviously discards ⟨that → all⟩ duality of op- /  
positions, ⟨– with⟩ which, at bottom, is only apparent, /  
but which is, nevertheless, real to us. //

It is evident that, so far, man in general, has felt /  
the profound unity of ⟨– th⟩ true life, but, living in this /  
unbalanced world, has not accept simultaneously the /  
⟨– duall⟩ two oppositions : did not live life as a whole /  
in which the duality is lost. For such life we should /  
need a world which is perfect : also further develop- /  
ment – longer culture. That is why one is satisfied /  
with unity which is only apparent and confines /  
oneself continually in particular forms of all⟨– [x]⟩ /  
sorts. Living among non-equivalents oppositions /  
and being oneself a complex of these oppositions, /  
one has not the certainty of the possibility of ///

real harmony in life. It is natural that one merely seeks “the better” in the oppositions that life offers one, taking it as an conscious unity. However, life shows us that its beauty consists in this that it is precisely the inevitably unbalanced oppositions that pushes us to the search of equivalent oppositions, which alone create real unity : that unity which, so far, has only been realized in thought and in art. It is thus in reality. But equally on the moral plane, the oppositions of ideas and conceptions bring us to <- th> truth : unification, the annihilation of opposites. //

Creating apparent unities, man tries to go too fast. But stopping at these he goes too slowly. //

That which emerges forcefully is the purifying and mutual separation of false unities : of particular forms. <- It is thus> Art shows it us. //

Art shows us that it is thus that oppositions come in true relation to one another, equivalence is found, rhythm comes out, the way is clear, open to <- us> true life. //

*[correctieteken: geen nitregel]*

If at present we imagine ourselves to be able to live in true unity and do not see the lack of balance in existence, we shall be disillusioned. Art shows us that we have to “create” this unity, and that this is only done in separating, breaking and in reconstructing the apparent unities which exist or easily appear anywhere. Being within ///

this reality, one must take it into account, and /  
 for that one must face it and observe that is /  
 not a shut, completed form, but a perpetual move- /  
 ment of changing oppositions. //

Life, history, science, art teach us that it is only by /  
 the discernment and experience of oppositions that /  
 slowly we reach unity, the fullness of life, and /  
 find that life is but a constant deepening of the /  
 same thing : a continual progress. //

*[correctieteken: geen nitregel]*

Fortunately, man in our days believes no lon- /  
 ger : he observes. It is therefore of the greatest im- /  
 portance that we find, in the midst of the chaos and a- /  
 bundance of life, established on the free domain of /  
 art, the true way to arrive at a balance of oppositions /  
 which creates, in full relativity, complete life, har- /  
 mony, happiness. Art justifies in a plasti⟨q → c⟩ way what /  
 is difficult to state literally. //

Generally, in life, one observes the particular forms, /  
 but one misses seeing their oppositions. However, it is /  
 exactly the proper and mutual relations between the /  
 elements (forms) which determines the whole. //

Plasti⟨que → c⟩ art has never failed to search for these /  
 relations nor failed to break the static aspect which /  
 reality imposes. In plastic art, the artist has detec- /  
 ted and studied attentively the oppositions of reality, /  
 searched to compose lines, forms, and colours in /  
 just and equivalent relations, so as to create a dyna- /  
 mic equilibrium which annihilates the static ///

equilibrium of things. It is there that the work of /  
 art emotionalizes us by its harmony (unification /  
 of good and evil). It is there that we recover the /  
 unification of suffering and joy – there that it is /  
 complete. //

[correctieteken: geen nitregel]

[verwijzingssteken:] ✕ .....

In plastic art the chief oppositions are absolute, /  
 constant. They express themselves in rectangular /  
 relations (established or not). But this absolute re- /  
 lation of position (height and breadth) gains a rela- /  
 tive and living expression through secondary relati- /  
 ons : of scale (– ,) and of value, always varying. The /  
 work never shows a repetition of plastic means, /  
 but always a constant opposition of these. /

Although these relations have (been always → always been) /  
 established intuitively, the artist, primitively only /  
 seeking to express the beauty of particular forms, /  
 became more and more conscious of the value of /  
 their proper and mutual relations. It is thus through /  
 centuries that a “culture of relations” was born, which in /  
 these days opens out. In the past this culture was mix- /  
 ed with the culture of particular form and opposed to /  
 this and it is through the reciprocal action of these /  
 two cultures that we can now-a-days consider this /  
 last as nearing its end : the search for relations has /  
 annihilated particular form, which had been more /  
 and more separated and broken up, and neutral form, /  
 pure line, pure couleur have be(tw → come) the only means /  
 of expressing these relations. The culture of “pure //

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 [verwijzingssteken:] ✕ Life has to grown to the (+ equivalent) opposition of its chief op- /  
 positions and to the equivalent me(+ a)sure of its second- /  
 dary relations. ///

relations” has appeared. //

It is thus through the culture of particular form, /  
and not through the neglect of this, that art, in the /  
new art, has arrived at the culture of “pure relations”. /  
For centuries and centuries form never lost its natu- /  
ralistic aspect, until these new times (since Im- /  
pressionism) having been first modified, it was /  
then annihilated.

[correctieteken: *witregel invoegen*]

Let us rejoice to be alive in the period when plas- /  
tic art has liberated itself from the domination of /  
particular forms. It is these forms which prevent /  
full delight in the unity, that only neutral form, /  
pure line and coul(e → o)ur can give, if these “means” /  
are lost in the composition. //

[correctieteken: *geen witregel*]

The study of the culture of art gives us certainty /  
that we are approaching a life which is no longer /  
dominated by particular forms, nor by unbalan- /  
ced oppositions : a life of pure and equivalent /  
relations – a “human” life. //

If the remark is made that art has always /  
shown harmony, we can ⟨– say⟩ see in the new art that /  
it is only by the power of genius (intuition) that /  
the art of the past, in spite of everything, has ex- /  
pressed a “clouded” harmony. Even though the art of /  
the past expressed balance, there was always some- /  
thing which dominated in the forms and the relati- /  
ons. For example, the predominance of figures and /  
of bodies in pictures, and the predominance of ///

height in Gothic, etc. [*verwijzingsteken:*] ¶ //

[*correctieteken: nitregel invoegen*]

Art, from antiquity until these days, shows us that /  
we are moving toward a life that is open, clear, free, /  
although we find ourselves still in the life of the /  
past, where all is confused, where parts dominate, /  
where all is mixed : good and evil, goodness and /  
wickedness, love and hate – where all is unity /  
that is only apparent. //

However one could say that ⟨– de⟩ the artist composes /  
the work of art, but that life composes life, and /  
that we are as if thrown into the world. But we /  
must not forget that the artist himself is impelled by /  
life, and then that we are all part of life, of that /  
life which does not reckon with time and space, and /  
which is at bottom – the same as art - always /  
the same. Life has only to develop⟨– pe⟩ in us. //

Even in spite of ourselves we are part of the great /  
composition of perfection, which is true life, which, /  
if we observe well, establishes itself in according /  
to the development of art. But don't let us for- /  
get that the present is the unity of the past and /  
of the future. //

- Piet Mondrian.

[*verwijzingsteken:*] ¶ It was the same in life. And ⟨+still⟩ now-a-days the /  
world is composed of non-equivalent forms by /  
non-equivalent relations. ///