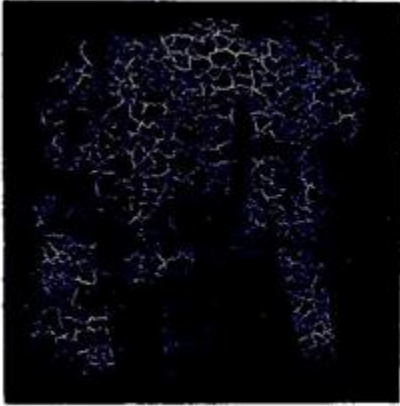


“Black Square” - “MDM-18/My Dear Malevich”



“Black Square”, 1915



“MDM-18”, “My Dear Malevich”, 2007

What does finding Kazimir Malevich's “Black Square” in the form of a pixel (“MDM-18”/“My Dear Malevich”) - via a digitized portrait of Malevich - mean for the 21st Century digital art scene and as it relates to 20th Century Modernist Art? Does this singular pixel level arrangement echo back directly to Malevich's own totally abstract composition? The digital process becomes a metaphor for Malevich's own journey deep with himself - his discovery of the non-objective soul of art contained within the objective world as to constitute a form of visual poetry with his “Black Square” and other Suprematist forms.

Malevich, who died in 1935, may have been aware of the concept of a “picture element/picture point” - “Bildpunkt” (the German word for pixel) - in the 1888 German patent of Paul Nipkow. According to various etymologies, the earliest publication of the term “picture element” itself was in Wireless World magazine in 1927, though it had been used earlier in various U.S. patents filed as early as 1911. Nevertheless, was Malevich thinking in “pixels” without knowledge of the term and even many decades before the fact of the technology, which utilizes this basic component?

“MDM-18” and other pixelscapes from “My Dear Malevich” simulate the “0,10” exhibition in Petrograd (Saint Petersburg), Russia, 1915. It inaugurated a form of non-objective art called Suprematism.



“0,10” exhibition, 1915



“My Dear Malevich” exhibition, 2007

The visual poetry (sensation) contained in “Black Square” and “MDM-18”/“My Dear Malevich” share the ironic connection between Modernist philosophy which moved visual art from figurative representational pictures of the physical world into an expressive and emotional world of abstraction, and the digital realm in which the purely abstract unit of one pixel off - one pixel on, has been utilized to reproduce once again, the physical world to reveal the abstract soul at its very core. Non-objectivity permeates the various forms being produced in today's world of digitization re: the Arts. This abstraction (Glitch, Fractal, Algorithmic, etc.) moves towards the impersonal and detached just as Malevich's Suprematist works were viewed and ostracized as such by the Russian government at the time.

Tom R. Chambers

Review by JD Jarvis, Art Critic/Artist and coauthor of "Going Digital: The Practice and Vision of Digital Artists" (ISBN 1-59200-918-2) [USA].

Pixel, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixel>

“0,10” exhibition, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/0,10_Exhibition

Kazimir Malevich, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazimir_Malevich

Suprematism, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suprematism>

“Black Square”, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Square_\(painting\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Square_(painting))

“My Dear Malevich”, <http://tomrchambers.com/malevich.html>