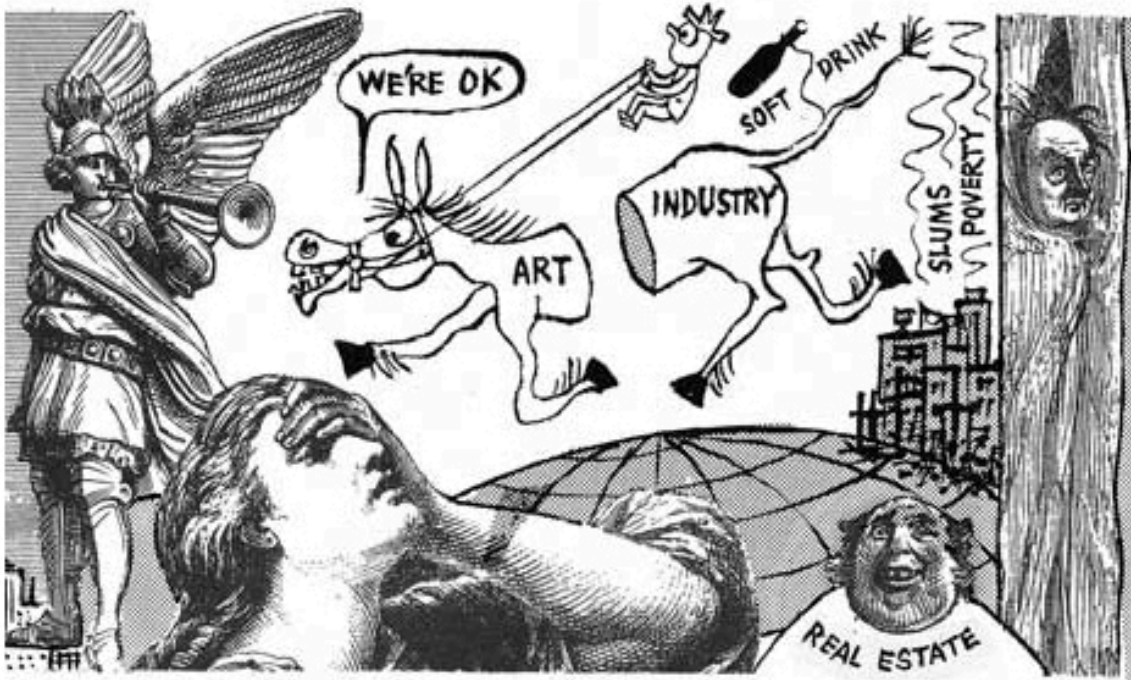


Maybe you think things are o.k. and that you are "doing all right." But someday the monotonous and ugly spaces you live and work in will be organized (by your children) as intelligently and as beautifully as the spaces have been in some paintings. A painting of quality is a challenge to disorder and insensitivity everywhere...

- Ad Reinhardt: 'How to Look at Space', PM, 1946 [28th April 1946]



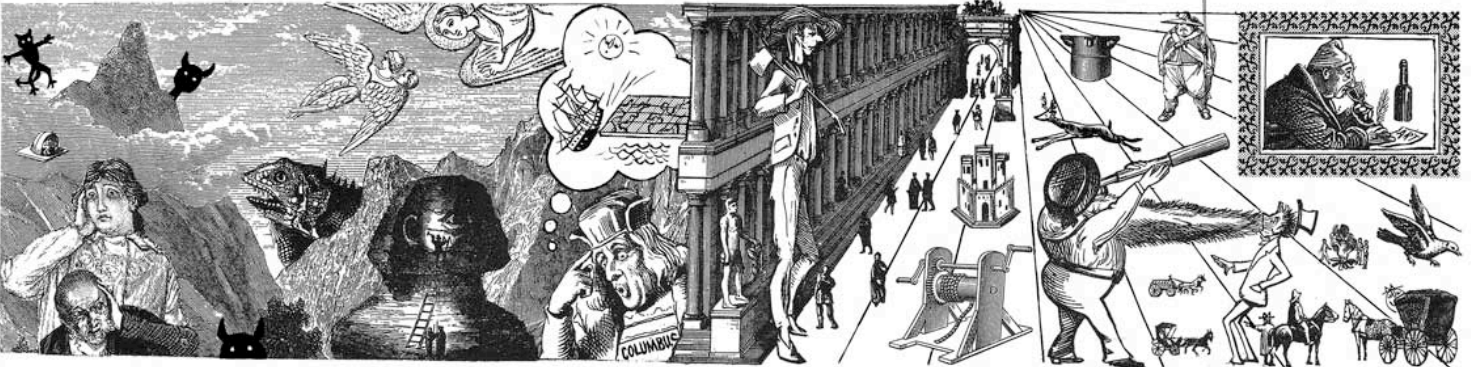
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HOW to LOOK at SPACE

All through history a man's idea of what was "real" depended mainly on how he felt and what he thought about "space." Each age developed its own ways of describing its space (and time). The history of modern art is a history of modern space (time) too.

*Fifth of a series by Ad Reinhardt

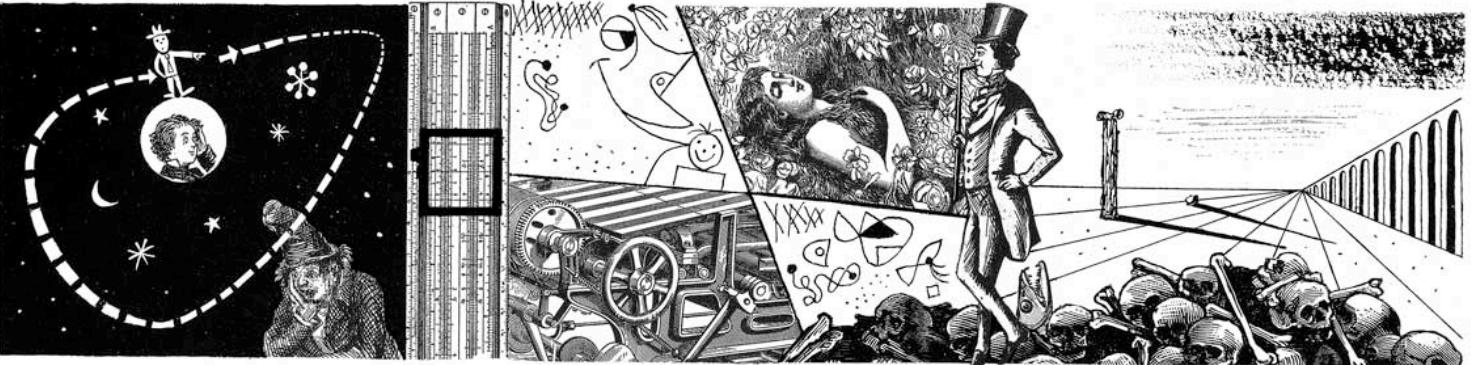
During this period people thought that what they "saw" was "real." Things were "seen" in space and a "painting" was thought to be a "picture" of this space.



Once space scared people. Space was a big, blooming, buzzing confusion. Even now, what space (or people) represent is still a big mystery but we know more about what they "do," today.

Somewhat later, space was thought to be a quiet and immovable something into which things and people fitted. And an empty space was a thing, too, an ether—or something.

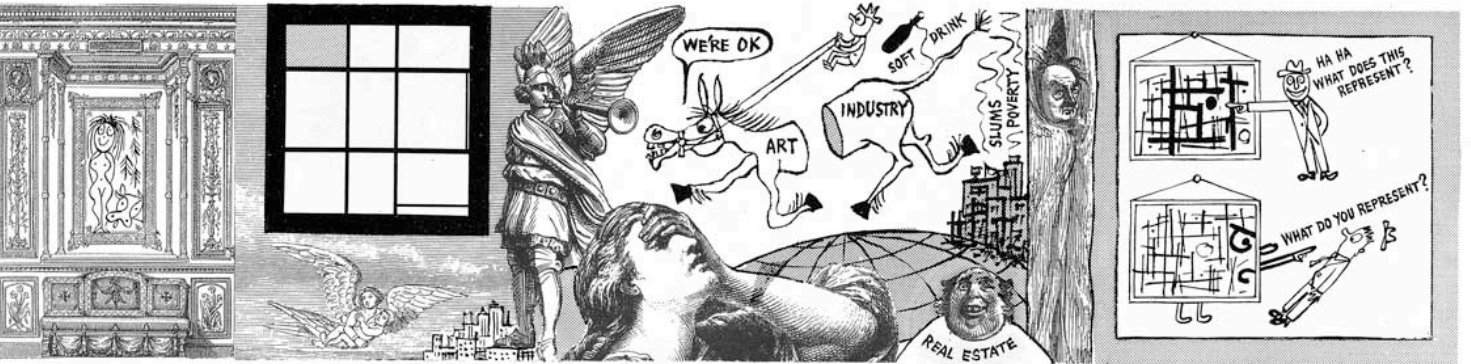
A "picture" was a one-sided representation of this space and after the horse-and-buggy (and Hoover) era, a machine began to make pictures that moved (movies, you know).



Space was a three-dimensional thing until Einstein showed that it had a "warp in a fourth dimension." (A ray of light traveling for 500 billion years would come back to where it started.) Space is a relationship between things and time (space-time).

A drawing is a division of space, a line is an edge of a space, shapes and colors are spaces, and a painting is a flat space. (Architecture is the Art of spaces, movies is the Art of pictures.) ("Art is science in the flesh.")

Spaces in surrealist art are lost, buildings empty, objects, usually bones, are dead — a shocking picture of the low spiritual state of a world which endures greed, race-hate and human exploitation. Spaces today have neither natural nor human dignity.



Abstract paint areas are real spaces—lofty, alive, emotionally ordered and intellectually controlled. A Mondrian painting represents "the maximum in the elimination of the irrelevant." If you like a "picture" of trees, cows, and nudes, which, as you well know, are not the flat spaces of a "painting."

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An abstract painting will react to you if you react to it. You get from it what you bring to it. It will meet you half way but no further. It is alive if you are. It represents something and so do you. YOU, SIR, ARE A SPACE, TOO.

