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A propos of Measuring a Mobile"

It was ^{more or less directly} ~~probably~~ a result of my visit to ^{Piet} Mondrian's studio ^{in 1930} and the sight of all his ^{deployed} ~~detached~~ rectangles of color on the wall, ~~which caused~~ that ^{the concept of} my ~~first~~ first work in the abstract was based on ^{the concept of} stellar relationships. Since then there have been variations from this theme, but I always seem to come back to it, in some form or ~~comparative~~ other. For though the ^{lightness} of a pierced or serrated solid or surface is extremely interesting the still greater lack of weight of deployed nuclei ~~is~~ is much more so.

I say nuclei, for to me ^{whatever} a sphere, or other form, I use in these

2/ constructions does not ^{necessarily} mean
● a body of that size, shape or color, but may mean a more minute system of bodies, ~~the~~ an atmospheric condition or peculiarity, or even ~~one's concept of~~ a void.
If ^{the idea that} one can compose anything of which he can conceive.

To me the most important thing in composition is disparity.
● Thus ~~at the outset~~ black and white are ^{the strong} ~~the~~ colors, with a spot of red to mark ~~at~~ the other corner of a triangle which is by no means equilateral, isosceles, or right. To vary this still further use yellow, then later, blue.
● ^{anything like} symmetry is decidedly undesirable, except possibly

3/ where an approximate symmetry
is used in a detail to enhance
the inequality with ~~something~~
~~the~~ the general scheme.

The admission of approximation
is necessary, for one cannot
hope to be absolute in his
precision. He cannot see, or even
conceive of a thing from all
possible points of view, ^{simultaneously}.
While he perfects the front, the
side, or rear may be weak; then
~~while~~ ^{while} he ~~strengthens~~ ^{strengthens} the
~~other~~ ^{other} facade ~~up in quality~~ he may
be weakening that originally best.

There is no end to this. To finish
the work he must approximate.

^{In a way it}
~~It~~ is even desirable that

one face be of finer quality
than the others, for ^{this gives a head and} ~~of not, then~~
^{a tail to the object} and shapes it more alive.
~~the viewer will not know where~~

A/
~~100 Stated~~

- A knowledge of, and sympathy with, the qualities of the materials used are essential to proper treatment.

Stone, The most ancient ~~of these~~, should be kept massive, not cut into ribbons. The strength must be retained.

- Bronze, ~~never~~ cast, serves well for slender, attenuated shapes. It is strong even when very slender.

Wood has a grain which must be reckoned with. It can be slender in one direction only.

- Wire, rods, sheet metal have strength, even in very attenuated forms, and respond quickly to whatever sort of work one may subject them to. Contrasts

5

~~my summary~~

in mass or weight are feasible, too, according to the gauge, or to the ^{kind of} metal used, so that physical laws, as well as aesthetic ^{concepts} can be ^{held to} ~~observed~~.
There is a close alliance between physics and aesthetics. ~~are very closely allied~~

Strength ~~and~~ durability ^{in sculpture} are highly desirable. However, fineness and delicacy may be even more ~~more~~ essential to the general concept, and it will then be necessary to decide which is to ~~predominate~~ control the design. Also there is the possibility of using motion in an object as part of the design ~~of~~ composition. The sculpture then becomes in one sense a machine, and as such it will be necessary to design it as a machine, so that the

by moving parts, ^{the motor,} ~~the bearings, etc~~
~~and the motor,~~ shall have
a reasonable ^{rigidness.} ~~life~~. Even those
sculptures designed to be
propelled by the wind are
still machines, and should
be considered thus, as well as
aesthetically.

However the mechanical
element must never control
the aesthetic. Much better a
poor machine ^{and a good} ~~than a poor~~
sculpture.

~~Work should be approached~~
~~from a ^{simple} ~~naive~~ or primitive~~
~~standpoint.~~
When one has attained ^{too} great a
facility, or is too highly mechanized,
at least in his attitude, if not
~~physically~~ actually, his work,
even though it stand all by itself,
may become ^{slick and} decadent, ~~and~~ ~~stuck~~.

7/ One should never stop
to reflect what others might
say, for the work then becomes
a sort of publicity art, ~~not~~
produced for its appeal to others.
~~Besides~~ And one will produce
very little if he is easily
dissuaded by adverse criticism,
or even the anticipation of it.
So-called Industrial Design

is not a fine art. Its motive
is to instill "style", ~~that is~~ i.e.
a yearly trend, be it up or
be it down, in ^{our daily} commodities.
~~Think of~~ ^{There are} certain makes of
automobiles, whose body
designs ~~were~~ of a few years
ago were ~~indefinitely~~ simpler and
^{much} better than those of 1941-42. And

after accustoming ourselves to
the hardy simplicity of Army
Trucks and Jeeps for a few

8/

years we are threatened with
being subjected to cars after
the war ^{whose design will be} ~~which will be very~~
^{like} ~~the '41-'42 crop~~
essentially that of the 1941-42 Vintage.

As mobiles are so particularly
my product I feel ~~that~~ a word
or two about their measuring
and handling ^{to be} ~~would be~~ fitting.

A mobile in motion leaves
an invisible wake behind it,
or rather, each element leaves
an individual wake behind its
individual self. ~~And~~ Sometimes
these wakes are contracted within
each other, and sometimes they
(photo in motion - ?) matter
are deployed. In this latter
position the mobile occupies
more space, and ~~this~~ it is the
diameter of this that should be
(maximum trajectory)

9/ considered in measuring a mobile.

~~About the~~ In their handling, i.e. setting them in motion by a touch of the hand, consideration should be had for the direction in which the object is designed to move, and for the inertia of the mass involved. Perhaps it is necessary to be fairly familiar with at least that type of mobile in order to decide upon the direction in which it will best move, but a simple glance should be sufficient to estimate the inertia of the various masses. ~~In any case~~ ~~Call~~
A slow gentle impulse, as though one were moving a barge, ^{In most cases will be best} is almost infallible. In any case, gentle is the word.

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Alexander Calder