

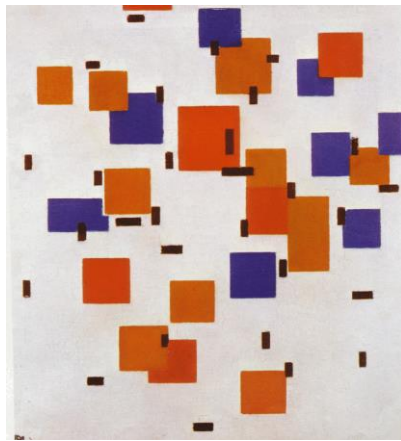
Visual Elements - Shape and Mass

I. Terms: Shape & Mass

II. Definition of the terms: Lines connect to make the borders of shapes. Shapes are two-dimensional (i.e., “flat”) areas defined by a boundary. Mass refers to three-dimensional solid forms with volume and identifiable boundaries. The word “form” can be used to refer to shape or mass.

III. Examples of the term:

GEOMETRIC SHAPE/MASS: Geometric forms have agreed upon characteristics defined by mathematical formulas. These are usually recognizable and have specific names, such as: circle, sphere; square, cube; triangle; cone.



Piet Mondrian's painting, *Composition in Color A*, demonstrates the use of geometric shapes.



Tony Smith's sculpture, *Die*, is an exemplar of geometric mass. Smith chose to use steel, an engineered metal. I think this adds to the work's mechanical qualities.

ORGANIC SHAPE/MASS: Organic forms are irregular and resemble things found in nature. A water stain on the ceiling is an example of an organic shape. A lump of clay is an example of an organic mass.



Joan Miro's, *Painting*, demonstrates the use of organic shapes.



Henri Moore's sculpture, *Recumbent Figure*, is an example of an organic mass.

Moore chose a natural material, stone, to accentuate the organic qualities.