

1985 MONDRIAN LECTURE

THE TOTALLY HARMONIOUS INTERIOR: PARADISE OR PRISON?

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NANCY TROY

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This year the Mondrian Lecture was given by the American art historian Nancy Troy who had recently gained her doctorate for her study of the three-dimensional color applications of the De Stijl in the interior: *The De Stijl Environment*.

The motor of modernism, the movement which dominated art for almost the entire century, was based on an irresistible belief in the possibility of reforming society by means of architecture and design. The argument was that good design improves the life of people who come into contact with it. The starting points were an honest use of materials and construction, purity of forms and omitting any superfluous decorative elements.

With this view of modernism, (which confusingly referred both to the modern style of about 1900 as well as the ornament-free functionalism of the 1920s and 1930s; Troy used it in both meanings side by side), Troy raised the stylistic and moralistic dictates for discussion in her lecture.