

Pamela Rohlfling, Special Education Teacher, Maple Park Middle School, Gladstone, MO.

Lesson Title: **“Deconstructing Architecture: A Look at the Avant-Garde in Russian Architecture.”**

Class and Grade level(s): 6, 7 & 8 Special Education Self-Contained Classroom



**Goals and Objectives**

The student will be able to:

Link the concept of deconstructivism to the art Lissitzky by producing original art from the shapes and colors found in a building.

**Curriculum standards addressed**

Math Missouri Standards: Tools of Geometry/Describe transformations of geometric figures from a given pre-image to its image.

**Time required/class periods needed**

2 class periods.

**Primary sources**

Exhibit, *El Lissitzky: Futurist Portfolios*, Spencer Museum of Art, KS, February 2 – May 18, 2008.

Organized by The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

<http://www.spencerart.ku.edu/exhibitions/lissitzky.shtml>

Lavrent'ev, Aleksandr, ed. *Aleksandr Rodchenko: Experiments for the Future : Diaries, Essays, Letters, and Other Writings*. Trans. by J. Gambrell. NY: Museum of Modern Art, 2005.

Malevich, Kazimir. "Suprematism," *Art and Its Significance: An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory*, ed. S. D. Ross. NY: SUNY Press, 1994.

**Other sources**

**Architecture**

Cooke, Catherine. *Russian Avant-Garde Theories of Art, Architecture and the City*. London: Academy Editions, 1995.

*Gosudarstvennyi Nauchno-issledovatel'skii Muzei Arkhitektury Imeni A.V. Shchuseva. Architectural Drawings of the Russian Avant-Garde / essay by Catherine Cooke*. New York: Museum of Modern Art: distributed by Harry N. Abrams, c1990.

Hamilton, George Heard. *The Art and Architecture of Russia*. New York, N.Y.: Penguin, 1983.

Hudson, Hugh D., *Blueprints and Blood: the Stalinization of Soviet Architecture, 1917-1937*, 1994.

Ikonnikov, Andrei. *Russian Architecture of the Soviet Period*, translated by Lev Lyapin. Moscow: Raduga Publishers, c1988.

Johnson, Philip. *Deconstructivist Architecture*. With Mark Wigley. Museum of Modern Art, New York, N.Y.

Kopp, Anatole. *Town and Revolution; Soviet Architecture and City Planning, 1917-1935*. Translated by Thomas E. Burton, 1970.

Miliutin, N. A., *Sotsgorod; the Problem of Building Socialist Cities*, Translated from the Russian by Arthur Sprague. Prepared for publication by George R. Collins and William Alex, 1974.

Pare, Richard. *The Lost Vanguard : Russian Modernist Architecture 1922-1932*. Foreword by Phyllis Lambert, essay by Jean-Louis Cohen. New York: Monacelli Press, 2007.

Shvidkovsky, O. A., Ed., *Building in the USSR, 1917-1932*, 1971.

Shvidkovskii, D. O. (Dmitrii Olegovich) *Russian Architecture and the West*, photographs by Yekaterina Shorban; translated from the Russian by Antony Wood. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Smithson, Peter and Smithson, Alison. *Heroic Period of Modern Architecture*, 1981.

Voyce, Arthur. *Russian Architecture; Trends in Nationalism and Modernism*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1948.

William C. Brumfield, Ed. *Reshaping Russian Architecture: Western Technology, Utopian Dreams*, 1990.

Zygas, Kestutis Paul. *Form Follows Form: Source Imagery of Constructivist Architecture, 1917-1925*, 1981.

### **Russian Cultural History**

Billington, James. *The Icon and the Ax: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture*. NY: Random House, 1970.

Massie, Suzanne. *The Land of the Firebird: The Beauty of Old Russia*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1980.

### **History of the Avant-Garde in Russian Art**

Bowlt, John and Matthew Drutt, eds. *Amazons of the Avant-Garde: Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova, and Nadezhda Udaltsova*. Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim, 2000.

Gray, Camilla. *The Great Experiment: Russian Art, 1863-1922*. New York: Abrams, 1962.

Lodder, Christina. *Russian Constructivism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

## History of the Avant-garde in Russian Literature

Lawton, Anna and Herb Eagle, eds. *Russian Futurism through Its Manifestoes, 1912-1928*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Mally, Lynn. *Culture of the Future: The Proletkult Movement in Revolutionary Russia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

### Required material/supplies

Poster size picture/drawing of the Chrysler Building in New York (or any building you choose), Construction paper (precut in shapes based on shapes in the building), paper for each student 11 X 16, glue, scissors and markers.

### Vocabulary

Deconstruction

Construction

Shapes

Colors

Circle

Square

Rectangle

Line

Arch

### Procedure

Hang picture on the board (or use projector). Have students point out shapes that they recognize from the exterior of the building. Guide the students to find the unusual shapes, e.g., a square within a rectangle (window) etc.

Pass out pre-made shapes to the students. Allow the students to come up and put their shapes on top of the shapes seen on the building.

Put the different shapes on a table in different sizes and colors. Don't forget to make some in white so that the students can color them with a marker if they do not like the colors you have offered.

Students will then produce a picture using the shapes suggested by the building and applied with glue.

When this is complete congratulate the students on deconstructing the building and constructing their piece from the "ruins" of the building.

Display Lissitzky art work in the classroom with their work.

### Assessment/evaluation

Each student earns a grade based on the finished product of their art.

Students will also do a word search of vocabulary.



*A Final Project (2008).*

