



## Why is this black square famous?

106,714 views |

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### what's known as

- What's known as user experience refers to the overall satisfaction and usability of a product or service.

### particularly

- We should pay particular attention to the needs and preferences of our target audience when designing the user interface.
- I'm not particularly confident here, we'll have to double check.

### go further

- To stand out in the market, we need to go further and offer innovative features that surpass our competitors.

### more complicated than

- The process proved more complicated than we anticipated.

### Despite..., it's neither...nor... Instead, ...

- Despite the challenges we faced, it's neither a setback nor a reason to give up. Instead, it's an opportunity for us to learn and grow.

... **has revealed**

■ Our market research has revealed that there is a high demand for eco-friendly products among millennials, which presents a promising opportunity for your business.

... **The result was <sth>**

■ We implemented the new marketing strategy as per our previous discussion. The result was a significant increase in your sales and brand awareness.

**On** December 19th, 1915, an exhibition of radical artworks opened in **what's known** today **as** St. Petersburg, Russia. Many of these pieces pushed the boundaries of form and style, but one was particularly controversial. **Hanging** in the room's corner— symbolically occupying a space traditionally reserved for religious icons— **was** Kazimir Malevich's "Black Square." One attendee scoffed at the painting's simplicity, claiming that even a child could have done it. Another went further, writing that the "Black Square" would "lead us all to our doom." Such critiques have plagued paintings like Malevich's ever since, their outward simplicity inspiring outrage and confusion. But **a closer look reveals that** not only is Malevich's work more complicated than it first appears— it may not even be a painting of a black square **at all**.

**Despite** its name, **you'll find** the painting's central form is **neither** perfectly black **nor** perfectly square. Its sides aren't parallel or equal in length, and the shape isn't quite centered on the canvas. **Instead**, Malevich placed the form slightly off-kilter, giving it the appearance of movement and the white surrounding it a living, vibrating quality. Technical analysis **has revealed that** Malevich already used the canvas for two other paintings. Today, cracks in the aging paint— known as craquelure— reveal fragments of dusty yellows, vibrant reds, and faded emeralds, hinting at all the stages Malevich went through before arriving at the painting's final form. His creative process **is also evident in** the vigorous brushstrokes, which are displayed proudly and move in a multitude of directions. Fragments of hair and Malevich's fingerprints **are also** ingrained in the paint, adding both metaphorical and literal texture to the work.

**In many ways**, Malevich's whole history is embedded in the "Black Square." Born to Polish-speaking parents in Ukraine, he lived there **until** he finally saved enough money to afford the trip to Moscow. **Upon** arrival in 1904, he **plunged** into all the avant-garde styles swirling around the city. He painted in the style of Impressionism and absorbed Post-Impressionism. He passed through a Futurist phase and then became influenced by the Cubists. And by 1913, he was on the verge of a breakthrough. Malevich **realized that** even the most cutting-edge artists were still just painting objects from everyday life. But he was irresistibly drawn to what he called the "desert, where nothing is real except feeling." And so, feeling became the substance of his work.

**The result was** the "Black Square" and a new style he named "Suprematism," where feeling alone was made supreme. **This would be achieved through** what he called non-objectivity— a departure from the world of objects so extreme it went beyond abstraction. Malevich believed the simplification and distortion that characterized abstract art was ultimately meaningless, **since** these styles were still focused on depicting real world objects. To him, **only the completely** non-representational **would truly be** new.

**While** this radical approach alarmed critics, Malevich was undeterred. He spent the next decade explaining his Suprematist works in essays, and teaching his ideas to a new generation of artists. But after Stalin's rise to power in the 1920s, avant-garde approaches like Suprematism were deemed unproductive to the Communist state. And eventually, it became dangerous to produce any art outside Socialist Realism— an enforced artistic style celebrating Soviet leaders and heroic workers.

In 1930, Malevich was arrested by Soviet authorities for spreading subversive ideas. Under severe pressure, he returned to figuration, painting peasants standing robotically in barren spaces. **But even these** later paintings retained glimmers of his earlier ideas. **Gradually**, the figures lost their arms and faces— disintegrating as mechanization gripped the countryside. **During this time**, Malevich **also** painted a self-portrait that seemed to have abandoned Suprematism completely. But his open hand formed a quadrilateral, and in the painting's corner was a tiny black square. **This was the symbol of** a man who suffered through wars and

revolutions, but never stopped pushing to create a new art— a refuge of pure feeling that lay beyond the burden of objects and the suffering of a divided world.