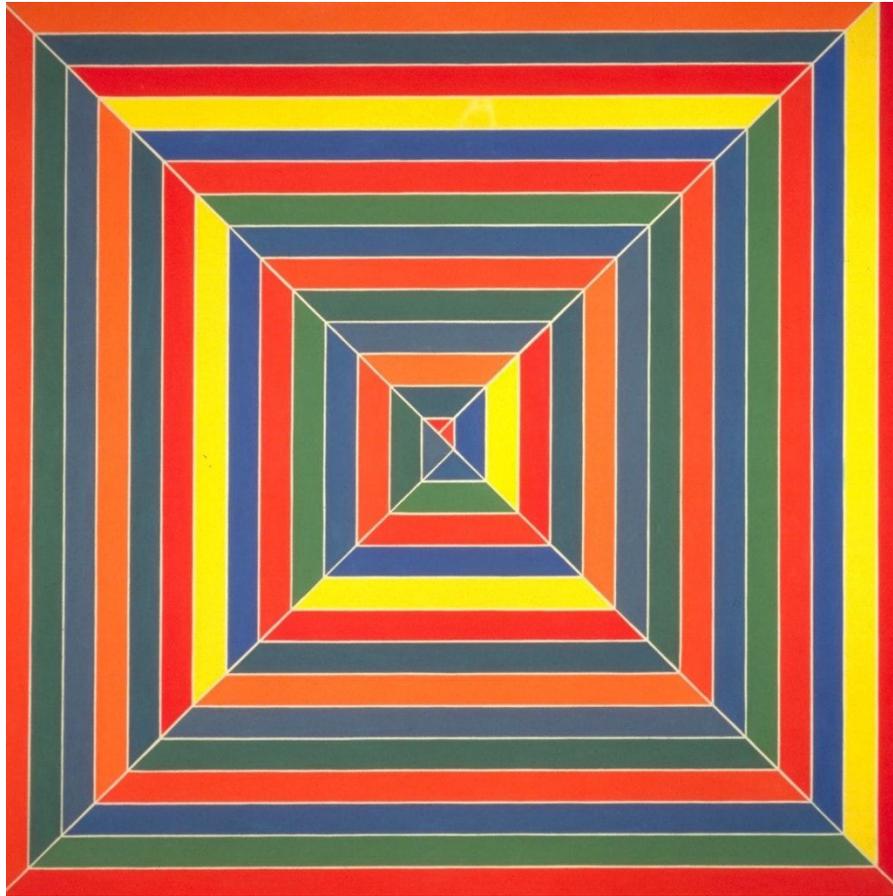


Minimalism is an abstract art movement which emerged in America in the 1960's, and which mostly refers to painting and sculpture. Minimalist pieces never attempt to represent an "outside view on reality", limited to using only simple geometric designs and industrial materials to devoid them of any 'emotional' or overly 'human' overtones.

This movement started to gain popularity in America in the 1940s and '50s, a period during which the abstract movement established itself as a popular art movement which conveyed strong expressive and emotional content. Donald Judd published in 1964 the essay "Specific Objects", in which he wrote that "It isn't necessary for a work to have a lot of things to look at, to compare, to analyse one by one, to contemplate. The thing as a whole, its quality as a whole, is what is interesting. The main things are alone and are more intense, clear and powerful." Minimalists wanted to immerse their viewers in an experience which could be considered purer, more direct, and more potent than ever before. Aesthetically, minimalist art offers a highly purified form of beauty. It can also be seen as representing such qualities as truth (because it does not pretend to be anything other than what it is), order, simplicity and harmony.

"Untitled" 1972 by Donald Judd is a large floor-based work consisting of an open-topped, almost square box with sides made from copper. The artist avoided defining his work as either painting or sculpture, choosing instead to call it 'three-dimensional work'. He used this term in his 1965 essay 'Specific Objects', explaining that he associated the categories of painting and sculpture with a European tradition in which the materials used in a work of art often represented or made reference to people and things that existed elsewhere in time and space. In one of his essays he states that 'Three dimensions are real space. That gets rid of the problem of illusionism'. For the same reason, Judd did not give descriptive titles to his works, and almost always, as in this case, left them untitled. What distinguishes one from another is the specificity of the materials, dimensions and colours used on each occasion. "Untitled" 1972 is therefore a 'specific object', the scale, colour and materials which present a space that appears contained but also expands outwards into the surrounding gallery, reflecting Judd's observation in 1993 that 'Space is made ... not found and packaged'.





I chose this particular art piece, “Hyena Stomp” 1962 by Frank Stella, to represent the minimalism art movement. I believe that this piece perfectly conveys minimalism because there is a common misconception that minimalism is about simplicity. This artwork debunks that and you can argue that minimalistic art can actually be more complicated and harder to decipher than typical art pieces. In this art piece’s composition you can see a variety of different contrasting colors and rhythmic shapes as well as the fact that there is no clear visual hierarchy. In fact the art doesn’t actually form much of anything because it is in a square frame and it has imperfections that are easily seen. This is another example of why this art piece can represent the minimalist movement since it’s goal isn’t to “look pretty”. The title Hyena Stomp comes from a track by the American jazz musician Jelly Roll Morton. Stella was thinking about syncopation while working on the painting thus why the artwork looks imperfect.

Nowadays you can be looking at a minimalist “art” piece such as an ad campaign without even realizing. For example Mcdonalds released this concept to advertise their free wifi. Obviously people recognized the internet symbol that has been used since before I was born, yet very few people can tell you



why the first thing they think of is the internet instead of french fries which is what you actually see on the poster. This shows that it is a successful rendition of a minimalist art piece.

As you can see all 3 of the images shown above are related to the minimalist art movement. All 3 concepts include different aspects and/or different styles of minimalism such as, rhythm, patterns, lots of contrast, geometric shapes, texture, and analogous colors. Each composition is unique in their own way with one of them being a three dimensional artwork, another as a poster advertisement, and a "classic" painting. With these differences they were all able to convey a different idea in your mind without straying away from a minimalist concept.