

Transcript

Design in a nutshell: Modernism

Voiceover:

In the early 20th century, the war to end all wars didn't end war at all, it stoked the fires of change.

A traumatised world was right for change, the world was ready for modernism.

Modernists wanted to forget history, or at least reinterpret it.

More than just a style, modernism applied to virtually all forms of creative expression.

Innovative artists like Picasso, Escher, Dali, they all started looking at their world differently.

Other artists tried painting light itself. These were the Impressionists. Surrealists went a bit further.

We had entered the age of the 'isms' - cubism, symbolism, futurism, constructivism, all these new modern ways of looking at the world blew people away.

When it came to architecture, modernists were intrigued by emerging technology.

Concrete, glass and steel featured heavily in their buildings.

Modernists believed that they could design a better society.

Ornamental indulgence was considered a frivolous waste of effort.

They thought function should always dictate form and that mankind's intelligence, creativity and capability for radical thinking should be celebrated.

Take the Russian inventor Georgii Krutikov, he suggested an idea for a city held aloft by electrical currents.

This at a time when there was barely enough wattage to keep the lights on!

Not everything they designed was a resounding success, but you could argue modernism was the single most influential movement of the 20th century.

From house music to housewares, tables and chairs to graphic design, all have been created by the aesthetics and ideas of modernism.

Do you buy into modernism?