

Advertising Rhythm. Hans Richter, Abstraction, and the Everyday

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The German/American painter, filmmaker and historiographer Hans Richter created art to organise movement(s):

The upheaval of World War I, I am sure, had something to do with this urge for "order." I myself felt the need to establish an Archimedean standpoint, to penetrate the chaos which threatened from every direction.¹

This visual essay assembles Hans Richter's movement studies from 1924 and screenshots of his advertising film *Zweigroschenzauber* (*Two Pence Magic*, DE 1929). In (no) specific order, the chosen images draw on Richter's art of creating movement. He always reached for a 'new form of unity, in which [his practices] painting, writing, filming and teaching could contribute to each other.'² In *Zweigroschenzauber*, his filmic advertisement for the newspaper *Kölnische Illustrierte Zeitung*, he transferred the rhythmic organisation of abstract forms³ from an artistic into an economic context, a matter of the everyday: advertisement. With his associative Montage he interweaved abstract and concrete form and juxtaposed differing and similar image movements and contents for a 'new vision':

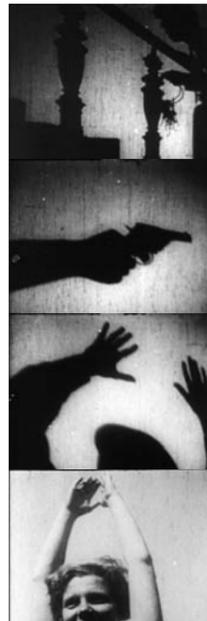
In the meantime, the scope of the experimental film has grown. The principles which we followed with our first abstract film are not limited to the articulation of lines or squares alone. The rhythm of a swing or a clock, the orchestration of hats or legs, the dance of kitchenware or a collar—could become expressions of a new sensation.⁶



Captions

1: 'A. Example of a unified form of movement'⁴
2-5: 'B. Examples of the different types of expressive means – where formal aspects remain'⁵

Others: Screenshots of *Zweigroschenzauber* (DE 1929), Director: Hans Richter; Austrian Filmmuseum, B&W, Mute, 35mm, 2'30''.



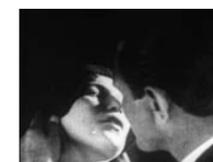
2: Position



3: Proportion



4: Light Distribution



Bibliography

- ¹Hans Richter, *Easel—Scroll—Film*, in: *Magazine of Art* (1952): 78 (orig. emphasis).
- ²Idem, in: Marcel Jauray (ed.): *Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Neuchâtel 1965: 103.
- ³Idem, *The Badly Trained Sensibility*, in: *Image* (1965), trans. Mike Waver; german original in: Hans Richter (ed.), *G. Material für elementare Gestaltung III* (1924): 44-46.
- ⁴Ibid.
- ⁵Ibid.
- ⁶Richter, *Easel*: 85.

