

Title: Visualizing the Unseen: Rodchenko's Monocular Discourse with Urban Space
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This paper looks closely at a number of Rodchenko's photographs focusing on their most palpable aspect – the visual effect they create. I discuss Rodchenko's signature oblique angles from the perspective of visual perception. The proposed analysis illustrates the continuity between Rodchenko's earlier works and his approach to photography, and provides interpretation of the visual discourse he establishes with the viewer. The comparative analysis of Rodchenko's earlier paintings, designs, spatial and hanging constructions reveals the parallels between his transposition of three-dimensional architectural elements and cityscapes into abstract two-dimensional photographs, which constitute a continuation of his experiments with altering space and perception.

I discuss the selected works which show that Rodchenko not only reverses the notions of vertical and horizontal, but puts them into question. He plays with depth, figure-ground, and size. The viewer is engaged in a visual perception game, actively readjusting his viewing position. The tension between the knowledge of the visual world and the visual clues from his images delays the decoding of the perceived shapes into recognizable schemata. I address the serial nature of Rodchenko's work, and the multiple possibilities of displaying his photographs. In approaching Rodchenko's signature device from the perspective of perception, I distinguish between images of architectural elements, the human body in isolation (the face in particular) or within a group.

Rodchenko employs the monocular camera-eye to manipulate the binocular vision of everyday urban space, rendering it through a degree of abstraction inherited from his earlier works. He re-constructs visual reality by means of a medium considered to have a high degree of objectivity, thereby establishing photography as an independent artistic language.