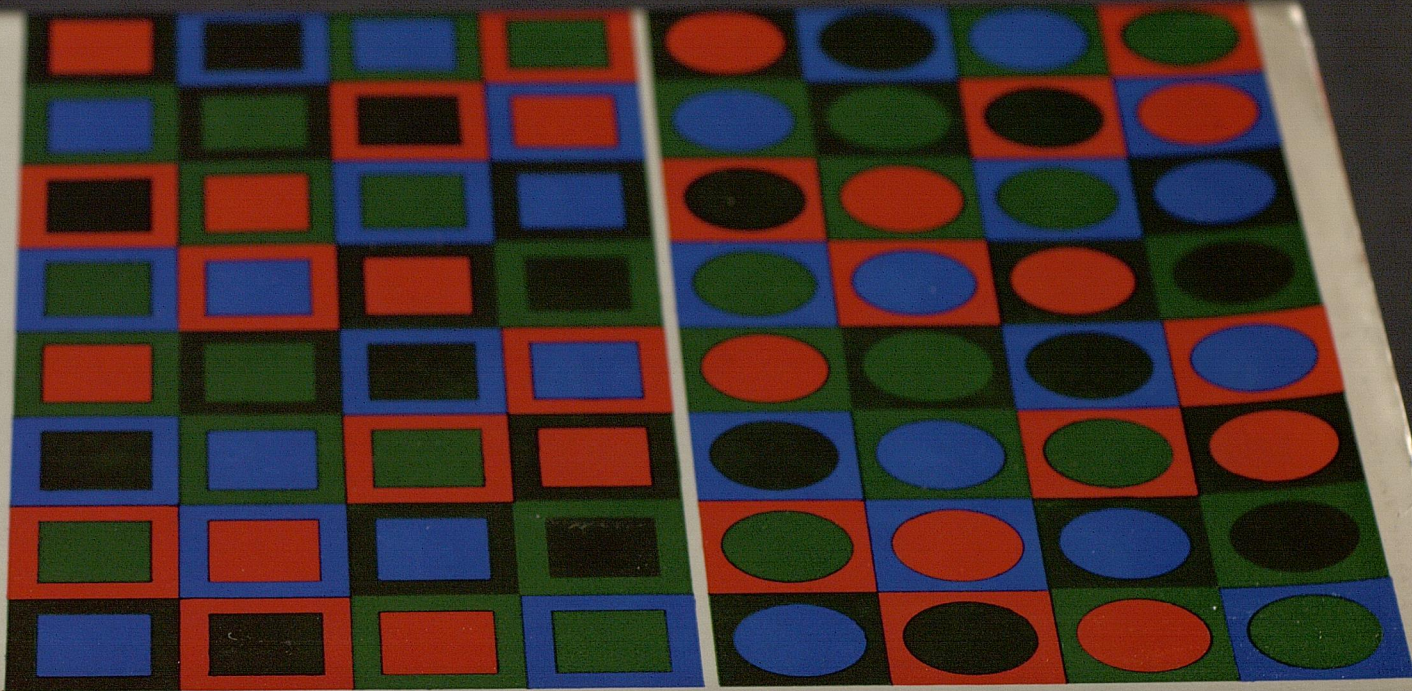
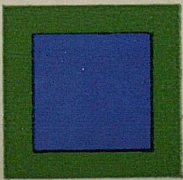


**The Hidden Order
of Art**

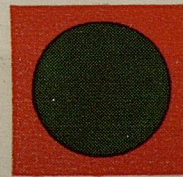
Anton Ehrenzweig



**The Hidden Order
of Art**



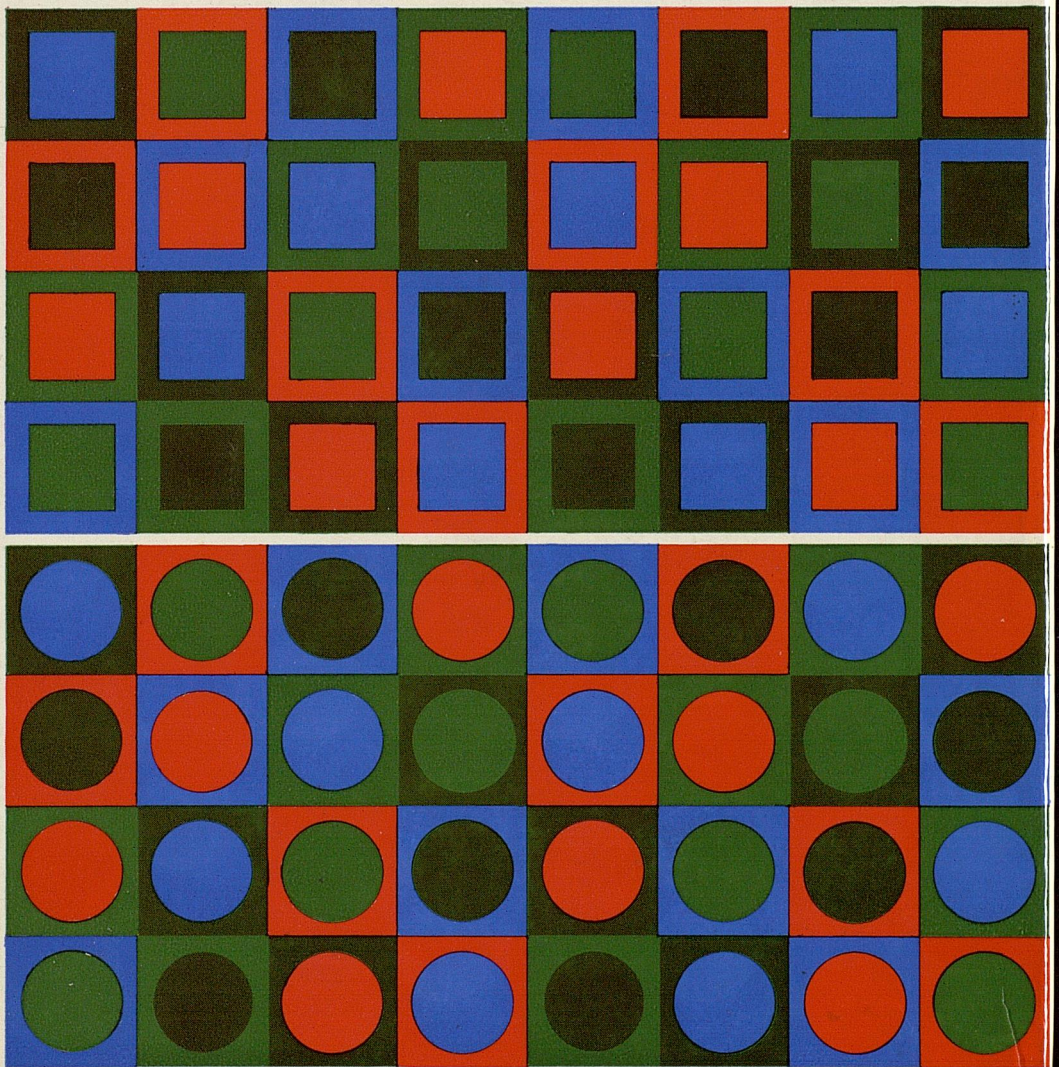
**Anton
Ehrenzweig**



Weidenfeld
& Nicolson

The Hidden Order of Art

Anton Ehrenzweig



The Hidden Order

Anton

field
sen

This book makes a deeply penetrating examination of the psychology of the artist and of artistic creativity, and Anton Ehrenzweig was uniquely qualified in having great knowledge and understanding both of the most recent trends in art and of the most advanced depth psychological theory.

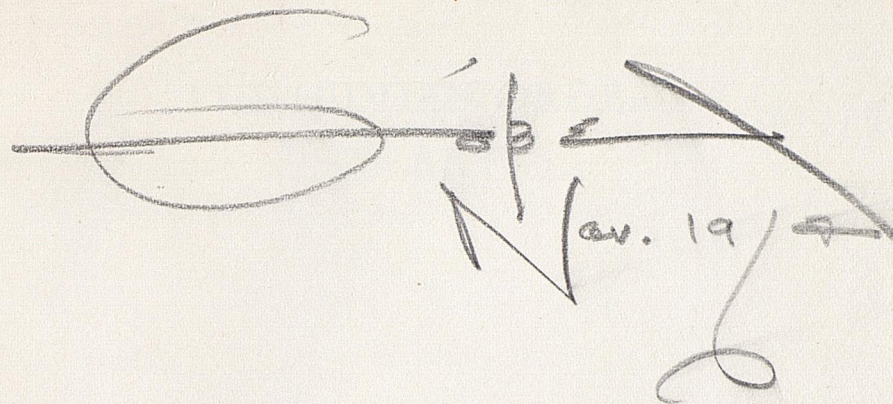
In the first part of the book the author shows that, in addition to conscious, intellectual critical powers, the artist relies on an unconscious critical process, and that his unconscious 'scanning' of serial structures plays a major part in his organisation of pictorial space, his use of colour and his creation of artistic form. The artistic and psychological significance of this concept of unconscious scanning is discussed in detail, with particular reference to the painting and music of the present day, the problems of teaching art and the development of the child's artistic faculties.

In the second part, starting from the most recent advances in clinical psychological theory, Dr Ehrenzweig discusses the ways in which artists are particularly stimulated by certain psychological situations, and shows how the theme of the 'dying god' underlies much of the greatest art of all periods, in music, literature and the visual arts.

It is increasingly realised how valuable aesthetic and depth psychological studies can be to each other, and Anton Ehrenzweig's work will be of immense value to artists, critics, teachers and psychologists, while for the layman it provides a fascinating insight into the workings of the creative process.

The design on the jacket is based on the author's diagram of colour serialization. Colour interaction is much stronger in the upper section, with squares inside squares, than in the lower section, with circles in the squares (see p. 165).

Price (in UK only)
63s net



ANTON EHRENZWEIG

THE HIDDEN ORDER
OF ART

A Study in the Psychology of
Artistic Imagination

Weidenfeld and Nicolson

115 Winsley Street London W1

Contents

Preface xi

BOOK ONE: CONTROLLING THE WORK

Part I: Order in Chaos

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|----|
| 1 | The Child's Vision of the World | 3 |
| 2 | The Two Kinds of Attention | 21 |
| 3 | Unconscious Scanning | 32 |

Part II: Creative Conflict

- | | | |
|---|--|----|
| 4 | The Fertile Motif and the Happy Accident | 47 |
| 5 | The Fragmentation of 'Modern Art' | 64 |
| 6 | The Inner Fabric | 78 |

Part III: Teaching Creativity

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 7 | The Three Phases of Creativity | 95 |
| 8 | Enveloping Pictorial Space | 110 |
| 9 | Abstraction | 128 |
| 10 | Training Spontaneity through the Intellect | 142 |

BOOK TWO: STIRRING THE IMAGINATION

Part IV: The Theme of the Dying God

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-----|
| 11 | The Minimum Content of Art | 171 |
| 12 | The Self-Creating God | 196 |

13	The Scattered and Buried God	212
14	The Devoured and Burned God	228

Part V: Theoretical Conclusions

15	Towards a Revision of Current Theory	257
16	Ego Dissociation	280

	Appendix: Glossary	291
	References	297
	Index	301

Publisher's Note

At the time of his death, the author had passed for press the manuscript of his book, the illustrations and captions. He did not draft an acknowledgement, but had particularly wanted to thank the artists who have allowed their works to be reproduced in his book, and who supplied photographs and information about them:

Maurice Agis and Peter Jones, David Barton, Richard Hamilton, Peter Hobbs, Henry Moore, Eduardo Paolozzi, Bridget Riley, Feliks Topolski and Fritz Wotruba.

The publishers wish to acknowledge their indebtedness to Mrs Ehrenzweig, Miss Anna Kallin and Mrs Marion Milner, who read the proofs.

Plates

(between pages 146 and 147)

- 1 Cycladic idol of the Mother Goddess, c. 3000 B.C. R. Sainsbury Collection
- 2 Bronze-age pot of the Lausitz culture, c. 12th century B.C. British Museum (by courtesy of the Trustees)
- 3 David Barton, Variations on the theme of the 'dying god', 1965.
- 4 Eduardo Paolozzi, screen-printed ceiling paper for the offices of Ove Arup and Partners, London, 1951
- 5 Eduardo Paolozzi, Welded aluminium sculpture, *Towards a new Laocoon*, 1963
- 6 Eduardo Paolozzi, Welded aluminium sculpture (*Medea* series), 1964
- 7 Detail of decoration on an Attic amphora of the transitional period, c. 700 B.C. British Museum (photo J. R. Freeman)
- 8 Detail from an Egyptian relief showing Akhnaton caressing his child, c. 1360 B.C., Ägyptische Abteilung der staatlichen Museum, Berlin
- 9 Details from three cartoons of 1805 showing the younger Pitt. British Museum (photo J. R. Freeman)
- 10 Paul Klee, *Ein neues Gesicht*, water colour, 1932. Karl Ströher Collection
- 11 Alberto Giacometti, *Seated Man*, 1949. Tate Gallery, London (reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees - Rights Reserved ADAGP)
- 12 Alberto Giacometti, *Standing Woman*, c. 1958-9. Tate Gallery, London (reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees)
- 13 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-portrait* (detail), 1663. Kenwood House (copyright Greater London Council)
- 14 Rembrandt, Kenwood self-portrait (whole picture)
- 15 Albrecht Dürer, *Vilana Windisch*, 1505. British Museum (by courtesy of the Trustees)
- 16 Dürer, *Vilana Windisch* (detail)

W their picturesque subjective appearance and patterns. Our under-employed syncretistic faculties that go straight for the object without regard to its abstract pattern could be enlisted within this general reorientation. I have explained how an excessive awareness of abstract pattern while we are looking at a concrete thing proves that we are emotionally detached from it. We contemplate its flat pattern at the expense of paying attention to its real objective properties, shape and meaning. Conversely, our growing concern with objective meaning and content can override the awareness of abstract gestalt pattern. Any formal distortion is potentially 'realistic' if the syncretistic concern with the concrete object is strong enough.

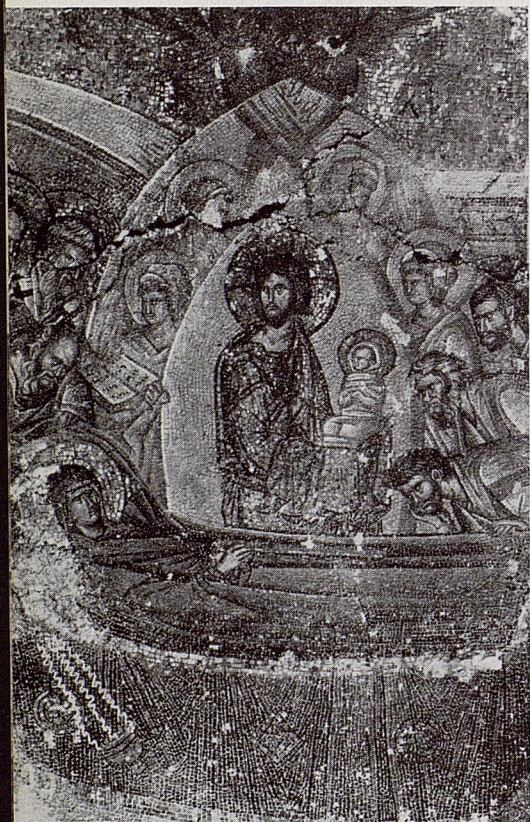
It seems to me possible to train the stunted syncretistic faculties by a deliberate intellectual effort. We can give the student a task that has nothing to do with pattern and everything with content and meaning. Fortunately there are conventional situations where attention to meaning and content overrides attention to pattern. Any transition from one medium to the other, any change of size, requires us to invent a new pattern in order to retain the same old content. If we execute a two-dimensionally conceived drawing in terms of a three-dimensional sculpture we have to change its pattern radically so as to preserve the idea behind it. Interpreting a truly two-dimensional drawing as a photographic projection will hardly do. Giacometti's sculptures and paintings look very different when seen as abstract patterns (plates 11, 12). The sculptures are stick-like, as though tightly compressed by surrounding space; the paintings and drawings have far more volume. But they too are enclosed, this time by a net of furry lines. Perhaps the working processes felt the same to the artist. Kneading the plaster into insect-like sculptures may feel the same as filing down the space around the faces and bodies in the drawings. In any case the onlooker can, if he has syncretistic sensibility, feel the identity of content behind the diversity of formal pattern.

In teaching, one has to appeal to the student's interest in ideas behind the pattern, in order to mobilize his syncretistic faculties, which watch over the integrity of an idea as he realizes it in different media. It is important for him to forget about sculpture

and three-dimensional space while attending to the two-dimensional work. For instance, the strong pictorial space of good counterchanges has nothing to do with three-dimensional illusion. It rests squarely on the unconscious struggle between several possible readings. The change-over of such strong pictorial space into sculptural space requires complete rethinking of the formal pattern, as obviously the space illusion of sculpture is determined quite differently. The British sculptor, Dalwood, during a short course under Harry Thubron, asked his students to forget about doing sculpture and scan illustrated magazines for any motif that attracted them. He then asked them to work over the motif in a series of drawings and to refine that aspect that was significant for them. Drastic formal changes already occurred during this purely two-dimensional transformation. When this was done to satisfaction he challenged the students to turn the essence of the drawing into sculpture. He insisted, rather drily, that a truly professional sculptor ought to make into a sculpture anything that really mattered to him however far removed its appearance seemed from the formal requirements of sculpture. Many students were puzzled, as one would expect in the climate of the academic art teaching of today.

Dalwood's challenge went against a deep-seated taboo of academic teaching. It is often impressed on the young sculptor that he has to learn to think primarily in three dimensions and give up working out ideas in the flat. This exhortation is none other than our old friend, the academic demand for precise visualization. There must be no interim stages and interim decisions as yet unconnected with an end product. But are there really separate sculptural and pictorial ideas? It is a great advantage to work out a three-dimensional idea in two-dimensional drawings if only because of the spatial ambiguity of most drawings. The ambiguity prevents a preconceived idea from setting hard too early. Keeping the final realization of an idea wide open allows the artist to engage the whole range of his sensibilities and his whole personality while he struggles with a flexible and unformed vision. The difficulty remains that the students have to re-invent new forms all the way in order to refine and in the end retain the

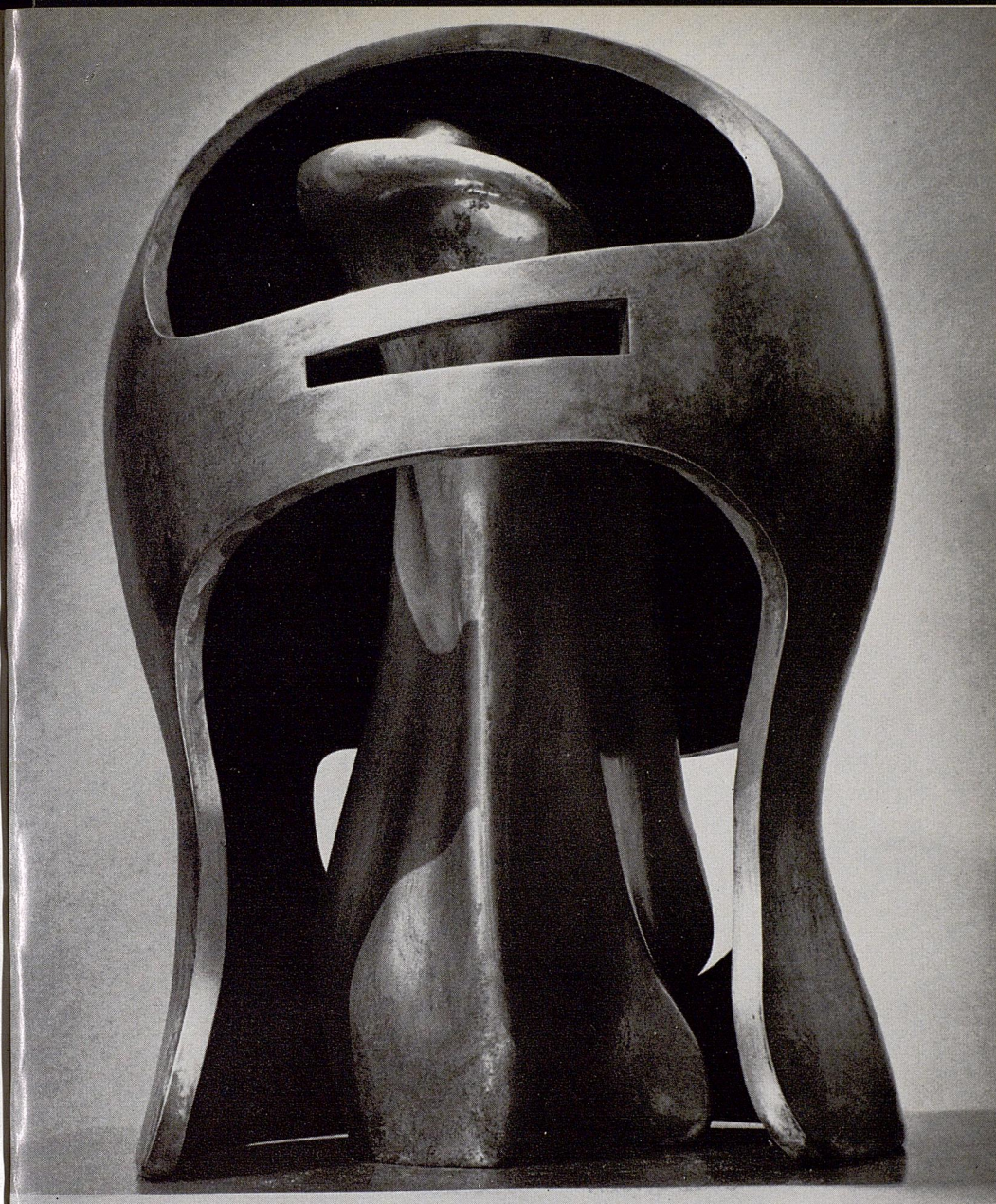
The Self-Creating Creator



27 (left) *Dormition of the Virgin*, detail from a Byzantine icon. This is the holiest of all icons: the son gives rebirth to his dead mother; Christ standing in majesty at his mother's deathbed cradles her childlike soul in his arms. The icon reverses the Western image of the *Pietà*, where the mother cradles her dead son in her arms.



28 (right) Michelangelo, *Rondanini Pietà*. Michelangelo comes near to reversing the traditional image. The dead Christ seems to carry his mother; she too hovers on the verge between life and death.



29 Henry Moore, *Helmet Head No. 5*. Moore, burrowing into his mother figures, created an inner space that appears bigger and stronger than the solid stone. His recent work has shifted to the male figure or head, but retains the same womb symbolism. The cavity in the phallic helmet is stronger than its outer shell.

P 141 — The

V 144 — notes
disg

151 — Teaching

Anton Ehrenzweig, who was born in 1908, died in December 1966 shortly after the manuscript of *The Hidden Order of Art* had been passed for press. He studied law, psychology and art in his native Vienna, and was appointed a magistrate in 1936. He settled in England in 1938. Until his death he was Lecturer in Art Education at Goldsmiths' College, University of London, and in 1956-7 he was a Fellow of the Bollingen Foundation, under whose auspices much of the research for *The Hidden Order of Art* was undertaken. In 1953 he published *The Psycho-analysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing*, about which Sir Herbert Read wrote in *The Times*, 'The book combines a profound knowledge of modern psychology with an equally profound knowledge of all the arts, particularly painting and music. It has had a great influence in the explanation and justification of the extreme types of modern art, and has been a direct inspiration to many artists.'