



In 1847-8, James Abbott McNeill Whistler's family spent some time in London with relatives, while his father stayed in Russia. Whistler's brother-in-law Francis Haden, a physician who was also a talented artist, spurred his interest in art and photography. Haden took Whistler to visit collectors and to lectures, and gave him a watercolor set with instruction. Whistler was already imagining an art career. He began to collect books on art and he studied other artists' technique. When his portrait was painted by Sir William Boxall in 1848, the young Whistler exclaimed that the portrait was "very much like me and a very fine picture. Mr. Boxall is a beautiful colourist...It is a beautiful creamy surface, and looks so rich." [1] In his blossoming enthusiasm for art, at fifteen, he informed his father by letter of his future direction, "I hope, dear father, you will not object to my choice." [2] His father, however, died from cholera at the age of forty-nine, and the Whistler family moved back to his mother's hometown of Pomfret, Connecticut. His art plans remained vague and his future uncertain. The family lived frugally and managed to get by on a limited income. His cousin reported that Whistler at that time was "slight, with a pensive, delicate face, shaded by soft brown curls...he had a somewhat foreign appearance and manner, which, aided by natural abilities, made him very charming, even at that age."



Pieter Cornelis "Piet" Mondriaan, after 1912 Mondrian (Dutch pronunciation; March 7, 1872 – February 1, 1944), was a Dutch painter.

He was an important contributor to the De Stijl art movement and group, which was founded by Theo van Doesburg. He evolved a non-representational form which he termed Neo-Plasticism. This consisted of white ground, upon which was painted a grid of vertical and horizontal black lines and the three primary colours.

Mondrian was born in Amersfoort in the Netherlands, the second of his parents' children. [2] He was descended from Christian Dirkzoon Monderyan who lived in the Hague as early as 1670. [3] The family moved to Winterswijk when his father, Pieter Cornelius Mondriaan, was appointed head teacher at a local primary school. [4] Between his 1905 painting 'The River Amstel' and his 1907 'Amaryllis', Mondrian changed the spelling of his signature from Mondriaan to Mondrian. [3] Mondrian was introduced to art from a very early age: his father was a qualified drawing teacher, and with his uncle, Fritz Mondriaan (a pupil of Willem Maris of The Hague School of artists), the younger Piet often painted and drew along the river Gein.

