



## VICTOR VASARELY 1906-1997

**Victor Vasarely** was a French-Hungarian artist credited as the grandfather and leader of the Op Art movement. Utilizing geometric shapes and colorful graphics, the artist created compelling illusions of spatial depth, as seen in his work *Vega-Nor* (1969).

Vasarely's method of painting borrowed from a range of influences, including Bauhaus design principles, Wassily Kandinsky, and Constructivism. Born Győző Vásárhelyi on April 9, 1906 in Pécs, Hungary, he briefly studied medicine, but after two years he dedicated himself to learn academic painting. In the late 1920s, Vasarely enrolled at the Műhely Academy in Budapest, where the syllabus was largely based on Walter Gropius's Bauhaus school in Germany.

After settling in Paris in 1930, Vasarely worked in advertising agencies to support himself as a graphic artist while creating many works including *Zebra* (1937), which is considered by some to be one of the earliest examples of Op Art. The artist experimented in a style based in Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism during the 1940s, before arriving at his hallmark checkerboard paintings. Op Art went on to have a number of practitioners, including Bridget Riley and Yaacov Agam. The artist died at age 90 on March 15, 1997 in Paris, France.

His works are presently held in the collections of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Tate Gallery in London, and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. In 2019, a temporary exhibition of Vasarely's work entitled *Le Partage des Formes* was displayed in the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.