



Form and Sense (Artists & Art)

By Wolfgang Paalen, Martica Sawin

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Wolfgang Paalen was a central figure in internationalist surrealist circles in the late 1930s. Artist and intellectual, he was a European whose fascination with archaic cultures led him finally to Mexico, where he founded the influential magazine *DYN* in 1941. In the bold texts from *DYN* that make up *Form and Sense*, we encounter a unique artistic mind and an oracular voice.

Paalen's book is an intellectual delight with essays on cubism, surrealism, the universality of forms in architecture, and the relationships that exist between art and science. He weaves together the new ideas and archaic inspirations in twentieth-century painting and sculpture. His nuanced and original considerations of some key figures—Mondrian, Kandinsky, Picasso—marked Paalen in turn as a significant thinker in the world of modern art.

This painter's book, illustrated with carefully chosen examples of the art he examines, makes us not only understand but also experience the rich interplay between idea and image that informs the art of our own time. A new introduction by the scholar Martica Sawin examines Paalen's career, particularly his influential writing on surrealism and abstraction.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Wolfgang Paalen was born in Vienna in 1907 of French and Austrian descent. He studied in France, Germany, and Italy and then traveled widely throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico. He lived in Paris until 1939 and then in Mexico. He was both a painter of stature and the founding editor of DYN. He died in 1959.

Martica Sawin, critic and art historian, pioneered studies of Wolfgang Paalen's art and writing in the 1940s and demonstrated its significant influence in her important book, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School*.

Deborah M. Rosenthal is Consulting Editor for the series. She is a painter who has shown in New York and nationally during the past twenty-five years. For her writing on art in many journals, including *Art in America* and *Modern Painters*, she won an NEA Critic's Grant. She is Professor of Fine Arts in the School of Fine and Performing Arts of Rider University.

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