

the vastness of the seas, mountains and sky.

"*The Tower*" (1942-45) should be mentioned here, as it shows once more how Arp allows organic and architectural elements to oscillate. There is an endless interplay of forms and proportions between one mass and the next. Convertible and loose-jointed, the component parts, although entirely individual, form when put together a surprising entity that has no beginning and no end.

The synthesis which Arp has succeeded in establishing between the natural and the consciously structural, between chance and law, has caused artists belonging to the most divergent modern groups to acknowledge his achievement.

To Mondrian, whose works are the result of a more mathematical and architectural mind, "*les formes neutres de Arp, qui tombent sur un fond neutre en dehors de toute détermination*"¹⁰ meant a confirmation of his own elementary and universal "neoplastic" compositions. Every trace of figurative representation, every particular form, is eliminated here in favor of a rectangular juxtaposition of straight lines and pure

colors, "*la nouvelle culture des rapports purs.*"

The surrealist Max Ernst, whose paintings often have a marked literary content and are as complex as his vision of reality (which is magically haunted, subliminal and scientific at the same time), underlines on the other hand Arp's hypnotic language. "*He attracts and reflects the most secret, the most revealing rays of the universe. . . . His forms carry us back to forgotten paradises. They teach us to understand the language spoken by the universe itself.*"¹¹

That two artists so diametrically opposed as Mondrian and Ernst should join in recognition of Arp is surely very significant, and can only be explained by the fact that Arp's art is one of the purest creative achievements of our time. This is largely due to a rare sensitivity, which enables him to penetrate and to disclose the mysteries of the natural world in forms so elementary and structurally precise that they seem to belong to the origins of existence. His art spans aeons, reflecting what is constant and constantly changing.

Translated by A. E. van Eyck

10. Piet Mondrian, *L'Art nouveau et la vie nouvelle*, 1931. Arp's collaboration upon the magazine *De Stijl* (founded by Théo van Doesburg), one of the most inspiring buttresses of the whole movement, as well as the collective achievement in the *Aubette* (Strassburg, 1926),

for which van Doesburg, Arp and Sophie Täuber-Arp executed the murals, show how excellently these two very different modes of expression can be combined.

11. Max Ernst, *Arp*, Art of This Century Exhibition, New York, 1944.