Recent Mathematical Stamps: 2010, Optical Art

Optical art – usually abbreviated to Op art, and also known as kinetic art – is an art movement that arose in the mid-1960s through the work of Victor Vasarely, Bridget Riley, and others. It has its origins in the abstract geometrical designs of artists such as Matisse, Kandinsky, and Mondrian, and in the constructivist approach of Walter Gropius's Bauhaus School in Germany. Op art is based on geometrical patterns, usually in black and white or in vivid colours, designed and arranged to give the illusion of movement to the human eye.

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In 2010, the Swiss Post office issued an attractive set of three optical art pictures, designed by Youri Messen-Jaschin, an internationally known artist of Latvian origin, who was born in Switzerland and who later studied in France and Sweden. The three designs feature a red sphere with a background of intersecting spirals, a pattern of coloured squares, and a dramatic arrangement of mainly black-and-white concentric circles and vertical lines.