



Nailed It

Agnes Martin embraced Minimalism's reductive visual vocabulary—subdued palette, geometric structures—but rejected its assertion that there is no meaning beyond form. Instead, she expressed emotional experience and spiritual content, especially in relation to the natural world.



The Wall #2, 1962

Take a closer look

Here, **Agnes Martin (1912–2004)** rendered what appears to be a severe grid. Yet close perusal reveals traces of the artist's touch. Hand-drawn lines waver slightly. Subtle shifts in color and nail placement further distance Martin's work from the manufactured aesthetic of her peers.

Something to talk about

Martin intended for her works to induce a contemplative state in viewers and encourage them to find personal associations. Given your own experience with this piece, in what ways do you think she “hit the nail on the head”? Where did she miss the mark?

In her own words

“My interest is in experience that is wordless and silent, and in the fact that this experience can be expressed for me in artwork, which is also wordless and silent.”

Agnes Martin, *The Wall #2*, 1962; Oil on canvas, mounted on board with nails, 10 x 10 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; © 2015 Agnes Martin/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

