



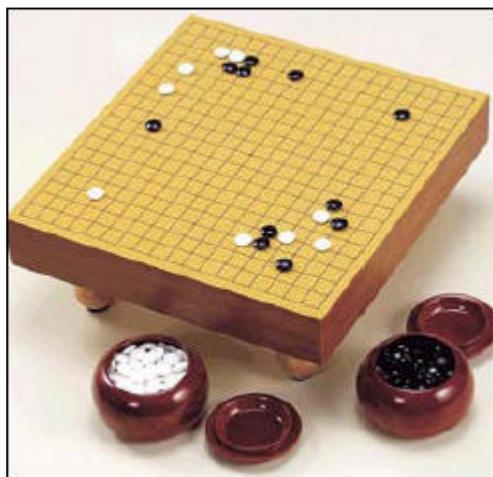
Baduk and Piet Mondrian

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Contributing Writer

Many people say that my husband professor Hahn Sang-Dae has a straight face and does not talk much. But to me, his "expressionless face" and "silence" are 50,000 kinds of delicate emotions and a loud voice. I presume that "Stone Buddha," the nickname of Lee Chang-ho, level 9 baduk player, means the same.

My husband once told me with admiration "when the game is extremely entangled, people tend to come up with all sorts of extraordinary moves. But Lee makes so easy and ordinary move that even the lower level players could think of.

That move, however, when we carefully examine, is the best move. And that ordinary move, actually, is the most extraordinary one "



Baduk board and pieces.

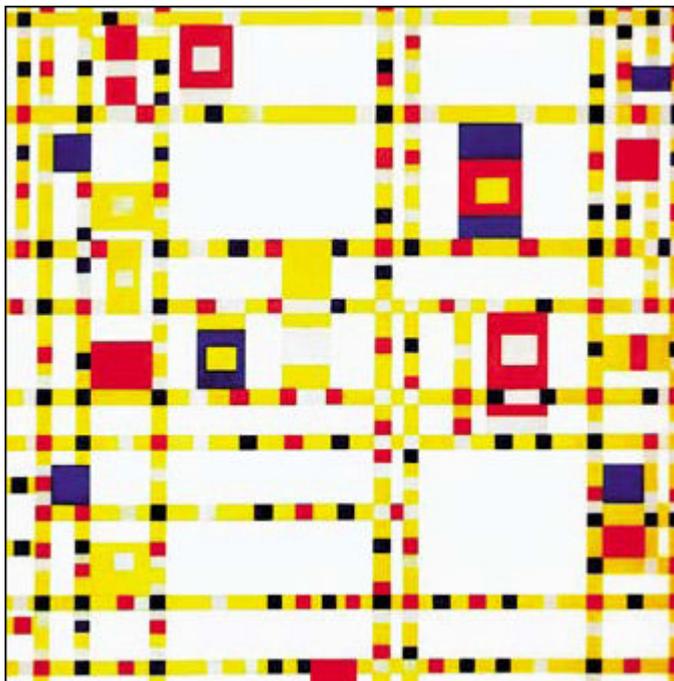
Recently, I had a happy moment of discovering the beauty of baduk, known as "go" in Japanese and "weiqi" in Chinese, being translated into the medium I also could understand. It was the moment that I felt deeper connection with my husband. I almost felt the beauty of Lee's baduk that my husband so admires.

My favorite artist, Piet Mondrian, the giant of the contemporary art, and Harry van der Krogt (level 3 baduk player), although belong to the different times, are both Dutch. Harry is a professional photographer whose projects include the ones commissioned by the National Geography. I would like to introduce "Mondrian in Baduk" that the artistic world of Harry shows us.

Mondrian refuses the detailed realistic description of ever-changing and undisciplined nature. Instead, he finds the abstract constant that exists ubiquitously in the universe. He expresses in straight lines and a few colors.

This genre is called Neo Plasticism.

Mondrian's paintings have vertical and horizontal lines and primary colors of red, yellow, and blue filling the spaces in between. It appears so simple and easy that even children could paint.



"Broadway Boogie Woogie," a painting by Piet Mondrian

But x-ray examination found that it was the tormented result of many revisions. The natural and comfortable balance of universe was pursued by painstaking mathematical calculation. We

call this ``Golden Division.”

It is not very wrong to say that Mondrian’s Golden Division rules not only modern paintings, but city planning, architecture, interior and furniture, automobiles, clothes, home appliances and others. It is the frame of the modern human living environment.



Lee Changho, a level 9 baduk player.

In the same way, I presume that behind baduk master Lee’s easy and ordinary moves are the extraordinary and accurate calculations. I imagine that is how his baduk without impressive or exceptionally excellent moves has formed the frame of modern baduk. .

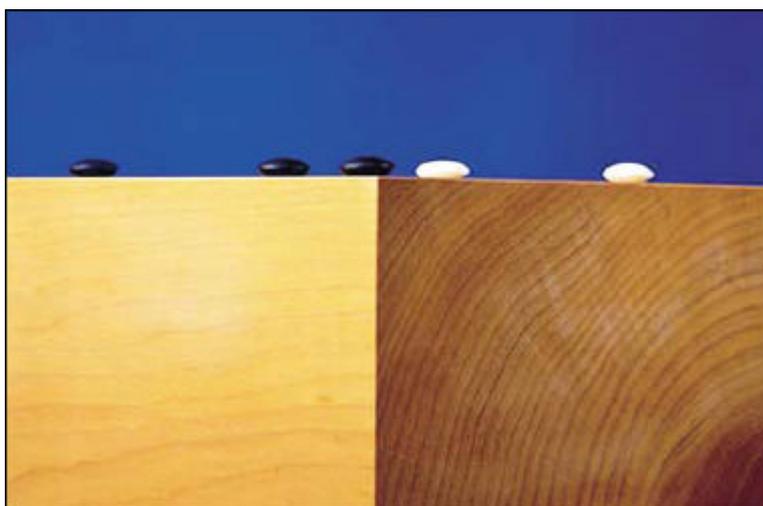
My husband’s favorite TV program is baduk. I can see baduk board, and black and white stones only. And I can hear the monotonous, stone-placing sound of ``tok, tok” in a few minute intervals. The program flabbergasts me every time. My husband, on the other hand, frequently gets astonished, impressed, and waits for the next stone placing sound of ``tok” in full concentration. He looks as if he were watching a mystery or an action-filled blockbuster movie.

A well-known work by Mondrian ``Broadway Boogie Woogie” is about the rhythm of New York seen from the top of the Empire State building.

Just straight lines and a few colors. But seeing the painting, my son Oram instantly remembered the exciting flow of New York he felt from the top of the Empire State Building.

Maybe, my son Oram who feels dynamic energy from Mondrian and baduk freaks whose eyes get pinned on the boring baduk TV perceive the same type of beauty.

Harry also reveals to us the aesthetics of the dichotomy in the profound world of baduk by a picture of board and stones.



“Baduk,” a painting by Harry van der Krogt, a level 3 baduk player from the Netherlands

The flanks of a baduk board in light and shade. The given, finite, squarely

spaces. On that straight line are being placed the curved streamlined black and white stones. They look mobile and make us anticipate protean future. The Black and the White stones will meet, compete, compromise, co-exist, and create passionate stories in the unregulated blue. Ultimately, however, their struggle in and out of the light and the shade is on a given finite space.

Like Mondrian’s ``Broadway Boogie Woogie,” Harry shows us ``Baduk Boogie Woogie” with the simple geometric lines of the board and the black and the white stones.

Harry's picture packages the scene of a ``useless meeting'' into an occasion of quite serious and important discussion.

His picture makes me understand my husband's explanation that seemingly meaningless stones on a board are actually the complex thoughts and sense of beauty that the player pours out.

Harry's photos do not exaggerate or beautify the subject by extraordinary technical skill. He just takes the subjects honestly and exposes their inner truth through sharp but intimate and repeated observation

The extraordinary behind the ordinary face the complexity and the sophistication wrapped up by the simple and the easy.

The dynamics beneath the serene statics.

Those may be the secret undercurrent in Mondrian, Harry, my husband's face, and Lee's baduk.

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