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De Stijl Continued

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An Artists' Debate

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now chose the same colour scheme. In the new floor plan which Van Woerkom designed for the long, narrow space, the living room was separated from the bedrooms by an open kitchen and a sanitary unit. The kitchen could be closed off from the living area by means of venetian blinds. The sleeping area included a small nursery and a larger bedroom for the parents. Visser made the children's furniture, and Baljeu applied the paint, but the lamps, tables, sofa, chairs and stools in the sitting and dining area were all the work of Van Woerkom himself. In keeping with the colour plan which Baljeu had drawn up for the rest of the space, the designs were done in combinations of black and white.

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Here Baljeu clearly distanced himself not only from the methods of Constant and Van der Leek, but also from the experiments with spatial colour being carried out around this time by a study group of the Liga Nieuw Beelden. In 1958 the interior decorator Kho Liang Ie, together with the painters Wim Strijbosch and Armando, put on demonstrations at the Stedelijk Museum as part of the exhibition *Kleur* [Colour]. They showed visitors how colour could be used to influence the spatial effect of the interior. In the model painted by Armando, for example, the three-dimensionality of the room is completely cancelled out by the colour. Baljeu himself resolved to avoid such an effect by not applying the colour to the walls, ceiling and floor. He painted the roof section and the walls in white and pale grey respectively, covered the floor with dark grey linoleum, and added the necessary colour accents by painting the doors red, the kitchen unit yellow and blue, and the cabinets next to the staircase yellow.

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Surviving photos show that the curtains at the windows are done in monochromatic tones, although Baljeu would no doubt have preferred a design of his own. In late 1956 he and Visser had sent a number of fabric designs to Weverij De Ploeg, a weaving mill in Bergeijk, and these were quite well received.<sup>49</sup> 'We would like to compliment you on your insight in the matter of which type of design is best suited to contemporary architecture,' the director wrote Baljeu in December.<sup>50</sup> He indicated that De Ploeg would like to put one of his designs into production, but the plan never materialized. The reason is not entirely clear, but perhaps Baljeu was not satisfied with the payment he was to receive for his design. He had indicated that he wanted three hundred guilders, but the director wrote back to say that he could not go any higher than one hundred and seventy-five guilders, since 'the number of customers who are ready for the design you submitted is still quite small, which means that sales will be limited.'<sup>51</sup> Perhaps this decided Baljeu not to sell his design after all, and to use fabrics from the Metz collection instead.