

WASSILY KANDINSKY

1866-1944

"OF ALL ARTS, ABSTRACT PAINTING IS THE MOST DIFFICULT. IT DEMANDS THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO DRAW WELL, THAT YOU HAVE A HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITY FOR COMPOSITION AND FOR COLORS, AND THAT YOU BE A TRUE POET. THIS LAST IS ESSENTIAL."





EARLY LIFE



- ❑ He was born on December 16th, 1866 in Moscow
- ❑ Raised by upper-class parents from different ethnic origins
- ❑ At a young age he demonstrated an extraordinary sensitivity towards the stimuli of sounds, words and colors
- ❑ His father saw his potential and enrolled him in private drawing classes
- ❑ As well as Piano and cello lessons



EDUCATION



- ❑ Despite his early exposure to the arts his parents wanted him to pursue a career as a lawyer
- ❑ In 1886 he attended the University of Moscow to study law, ethnography and economics
- ❑ Though he focused his time on his academic studies his interest in color symbolism and its effect on the human psyche grew
- ❑ Especially, when he attended a ethnography research trip in 1889 where it sparked a interest in folk art which he would carry throughout his career
- ❑ He earned his degree and pursued his career in law education by lecturing at the University

EARLY TRAINING



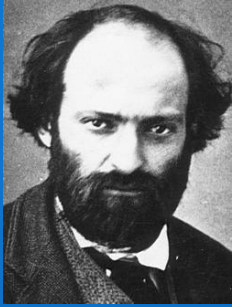
- ❑ Despite his success as an educator Kandinsky left his career in law to attend the art school of Anton Azbe in Munich in 1896 for two years
- ❑ This where he received the first skills in image composition, worked with line and form.
- ❑ During his time at the school he became acquainted with a co-conspirator known as Alexei Jawlensky who introduced him to the artistic avant -garde. Avant-garde is art that is innovatory, introducing or exploring new forms or subject matters.
- ❑ In 1900 he studied under Franz von Stuck who was a German graphic artist at the Academy of Fine Arts
- ❑ While studying under Franz he painted mostly black and white paintings because Franz believed his palette was too bright



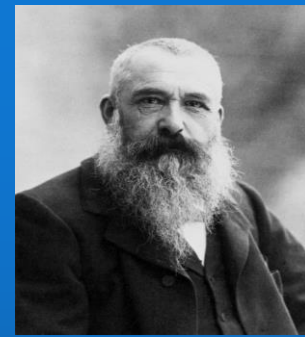
EARLY TRAINING CONTINUE



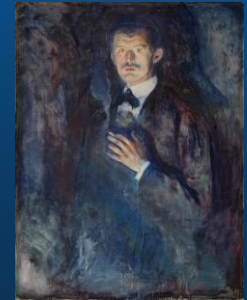
- ❑ In 1901 along with three other artists he co-founded Phalanx. It was an artist association opposed to the conservative views of tradition art institutions
- ❑ Between 1903 and 1909 he familiarized himself with the expressionist movement
- ❑ He developed his own style based on the diverse artistic resources he witnessed while travelling
- ❑ Art was seen as avant-garde art – seen as too radical for the traditional organizations and academies of the time
- ❑ His paintings became more abstract from the surrounding world
- ❑ Began titling his works by improvisation, composition or impressionism to further stress their distance from the objective world



INSPIRATIONS



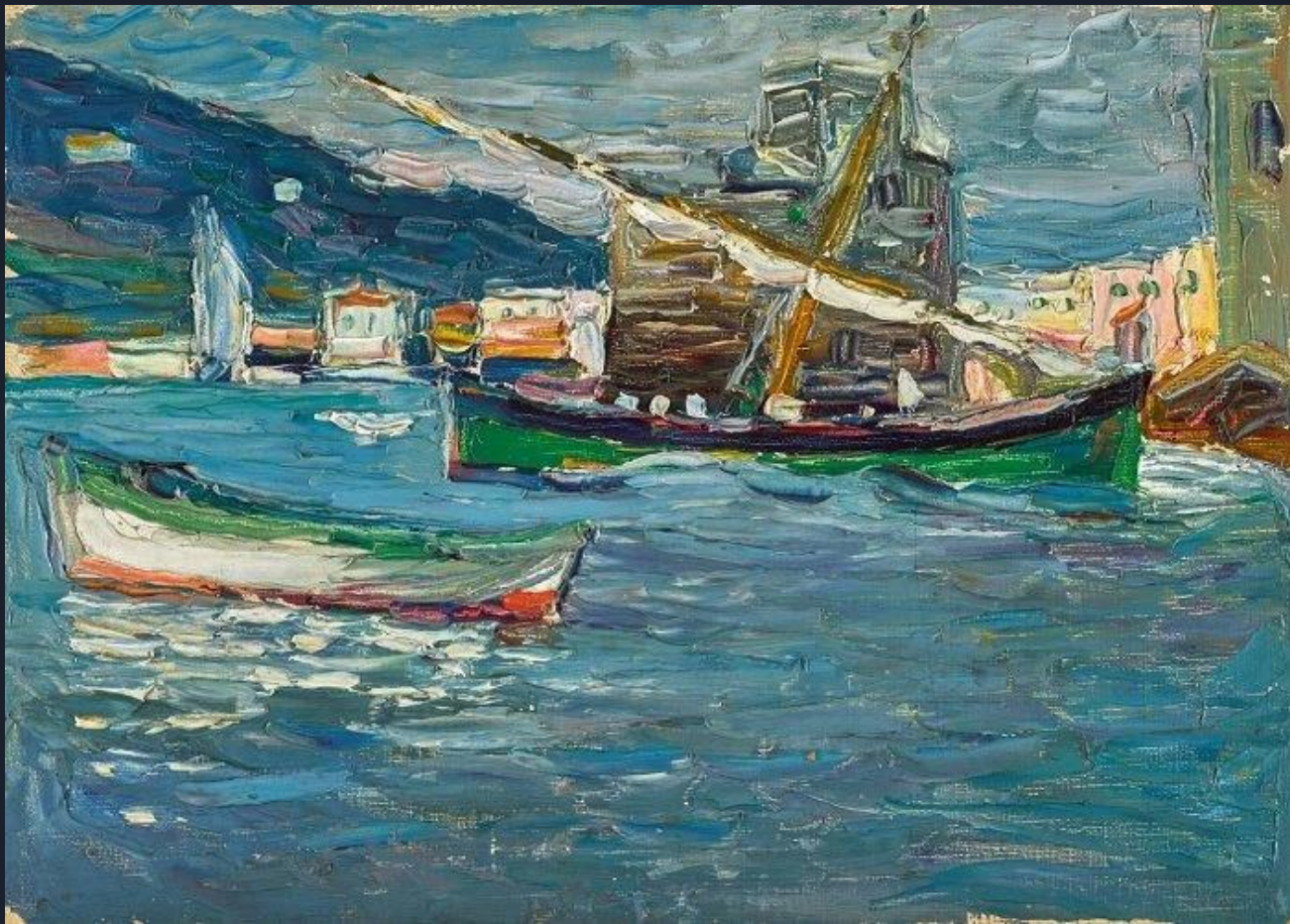
- ❑ Paul Cezanne- French oil painter, was pivotal for the development of modernist movements such as Fauvism and Cubism
- ❑ Claude Monet- a key figure in the impressionist movement that transformed French painting in the second half of the nineteenth century
- ❑ Friends/personal connections: Paul Klee, Franz Marc, Walter Gropius, and Arnold Schoenberg
- ❑ Movements/ideas: Post-impressionism, fauvism, cubism, expressionism



DER BLAUE REITER: THE BLUE RIDER (1903)

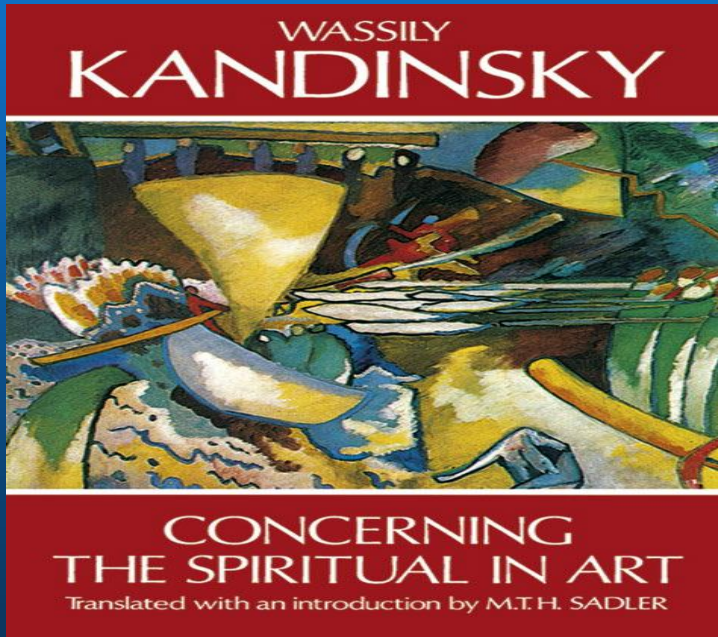


- ❑ Demonstrated a clear stylistic link to the work of the impressionist such as Claude Monet
- ❑ Shown in the contrasts of light and dark on the sun-dappled hillside. The lack of a clear figure of the rider on the horseback rendered in a variety of colors that almost bended together foreshadow his interest in abstraction



Rapallo: Grauer Tag (Rapallo: Grauer Day) - 1905

CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL IN ART



- ❑ In 1911 he published Concerning the Spiritual in Art
- ❑ It was his first theoretical treatise on abstraction that articulated his theory that the artist was a spiritual being who communicated through
- ❑ Also was impacted by the lines, colors and composition

COMPOSITION VII (1913)



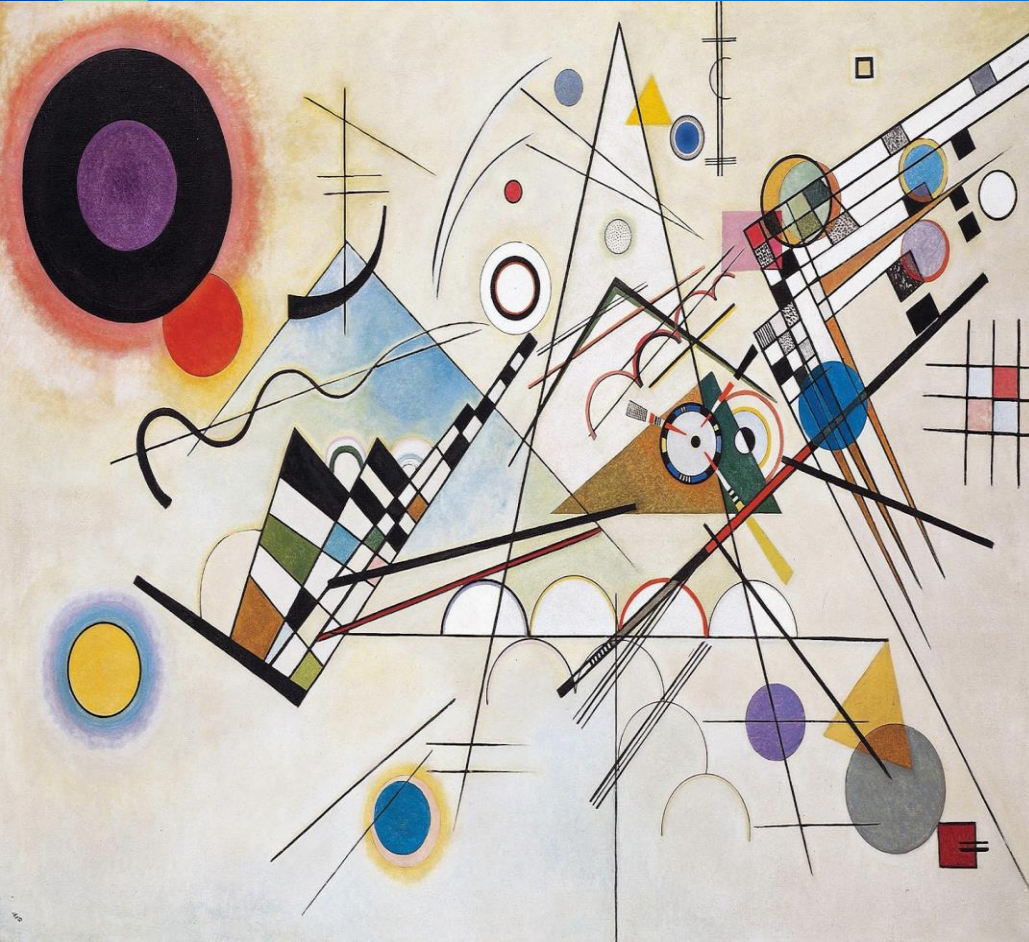
- ❑ It showed the artists rejection of pictorial representation through a swirling hurricane of colors and shapes
- ❑ Kandinsky believed that painting could evoke sounds the way music called to mind certain colors and forms
- ❑ The different colors and symbols spiral around each other which eliminated traditional references to depth and laid bare the different abstracted glyphs in order to communicate deeper themes and emotions to all cultures

MOSCOW I (RED SQUARE)



- 1914 - He represents the city's monuments in this paintings and captured the spirit of the city
- He maintained his commitment to the synesthesias of color, sound and spiritual expression in art

COMPOSITION VIII



- Painted in 1923
- It is an expression of his clarified ideas about modern, non-objective art particularly the significance of shapes
- This work illustrates how he synthesized elements from Suprematism, Constructivism and the school's own ethos (Bauhaus)

POINT AND LINE TO PLANE

Wassily Kandinsky
POINT AND LINE
TO PLANE



- In 1926 he published his second major theoretical work
- It outlined his ideas about the “science of painting”

SEVERAL CIRCLES



COMPOSITION X



LATE PERIOD

- ❑ Between 1914 to 1921 he returned to Russia
- ❑ When his art was rejected in Russia he moved back to Germany to teach at an art school called the Bauhaus
- ❑ In 1921 Walter Gropius an architect invited Kandinsky to Germany to teach at the Weimar Bauhaus
- ❑ During his time teaching his artistic philosophy focused on the significance of geometric elements such as circles, half-circles, straight lines, angles, squares, checkerboards and triangles
- ❑ In 1934 he left Germany because of the world war II and moved to Paris
- ❑ While in France he experimented with biomorphic forms of art which were more organic than the harsh geometric shapes of his Bauhaus paintings
- ❑ Died on December 13, 1944 in Neuilly -sur- Seine France by cerebrovascular disease



SIGNIFICANCE

- ❑ He is one of the creators of ABSTRACT ART.
 - ❑ Wassily viewed music as the most transcendent form of non-objective art. He wanted to provide people with a spiritually painting that alluded a similar sounds and emotions that music did
 - ❑ This belief is the foundation for ABSTRACT art.
 - ❑ The Abstract movement would break down all beliefs about what could be considered art.
- ❑ His work both artistic and theoretical played a large role in philosophic foundation for later modern movements such as Abstract Expressionism and its variants like Color Field Painting
- ❑ He sought to convey profound spirituality and the depth of human emotion through a universal visual language of abstract forms and colors

ACTIVITY

- ❑ Abstract art piece: including black lines, patterns, circles, triangles, and squares
- ❑ Material used: white paper, markers
- ❑ Instructions: Draw shapes that symbolize how you feel about the songs

