

Wassily Kandinsky

Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian painter and writer about art theory who worked in the first half of the 20th Century. He was a pioneer of abstract non-representational art. We will be concentrating on his paintings from the mid 1920s.

Biographical details:	
Dates:	1866—1944
Nationality:	Russian
Born in:	Moscow
Grew up in:	Odessa
Worked in:	Russia, Germany and France
Movement:	Abstract Art



Key facts:

Kandinsky trained as a lawyer and gave up a career as an academic to pursue painting at the age of 30.

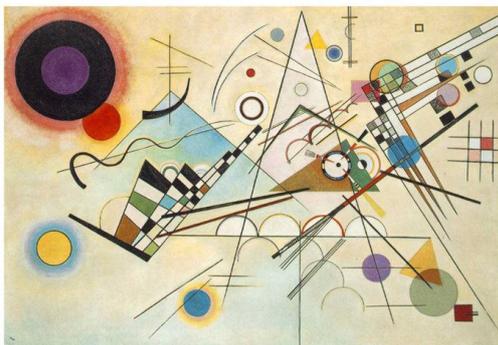
He was first influenced by the Impressionists and, in particular, by seeing an exhibition by Monet including *Haystacks*.

He became convinced that colour and shape were important for their own sake, and that paintings did not need to represent objects in the real world.

He likened painting to composing music and many of his works have names linked to musical forms such as *Improvisation* and *Composition*.

He associated particular shapes and colours with abstract thoughts, emotions and musical sounds. He wrote two books about his theories: *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1910) and *Point and Line to Plane* (1926)

From 1911—1914, Kandinsky was part of *Der Blaue Reiter*, a group of like-minded Russian and German artists. He later taught at the *Bauhaus* alongside Paul Klee and others.



Composition VIII (1923)



Transverse Line (1923)



Black and violet (1923)



Yellow - red - blue (1925)

Quotations:

Music is the ultimate teacher.

Colour is a means of exerting direct influence on the soul.

Lend your ears to music, open your eyes to painting, and... stop thinking! Just ask yourself whether the work has enabled you to 'walk about' into a hitherto unknown world. If the answer is yes, what more do you want?