

# Wassily Kandinsky

(1866 - 1944)

Wassily Kandinsky is regarded as one of the first creators of abstraction in modern painting. His continuous quest for new forms and shapes rendered him as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

Vasily Vasilyevich Kandinsky was born in December 4, 1866, in Moscow, Russia.

Kandinsky spent his childhood emerged in the world of music. His parents played the piano and zither, and he played the piano and cello. This early musical exposure would become a major influence in many of his future works.

Kandinsky did not always aspire to be an artist. In 1886, he enrolled at and graduated from the University of Moscow where he chose to study Law and Economics. After graduation, he lectured at the Moscow Faculty of Law.

His change in career was a sudden decision that was made soon after attending a French Impressionist exhibition in 1895. At the age of 30, Kandinsky gave up his law career and went to Munich to study art.

It did not take long for him to become established in his new career. His work was exhibited throughout Europe from 1903 onwards. His art was known for causing controversy amongst the public and his contemporaries.

Kandinsky also became an active participant in several of the most influential and controversial art movements of the 20th century. In 1911, with Paul Klee, he founded the Blaue Reiter group, the new abstract school in Munich. Also, in 1922, he joined the Bauhaus group at Weimar where he developed his distinct geometric style.

In 1933, when Hitler closed the Bauhaus, Kandinsky fled Germany. He settled in Neuilly, Paris. Just like his earlier works, the paintings from these later years became the subject of controversy. Because of his deviation from the popular style of art of the time, Kandinsky's abstract method was not well liked

by many of the established artists in Paris. The younger artists of the community admired him, however.

Some of his most notable works include *Contrasting Sounds* (1924), *On White II* (1923), and *Autumn in Bavaria* (1908).

Kandinsky continued to paint up until the time of his death in June 1944.

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