

# Wassily Kandinsky

A concise collector's companion to this artist's page on TryArtwork.

Wassily Kandinsky (1866 – 1944) was a Russian painter associated with Expressionism, Abstract art, Der Blaue Reiter, Bauhaus. Their work is recognised for founder of non-objective painting; geometric and biomorphic forms organised like music; colour-as-spiritual-language.



Portrait

## At a Glance

Nationality	Russian
Lifespan	1866 – 1944
Movement	Expressionism, Abstract art, Der Blaue Reiter, Bauhaus
School	Der Blaue Reiter, Bauhaus
Best known for	Founder of non-objective painting; geometric and biomorphic forms organised like music; colour-as-spiritual-language
Core subjects	Abstract
Medium	Oil paint, Watercolour, Tempera, Gouache
Central collection	Centre Pompidou (Paris)

## Signature Style & How to Recognize It

Pure abstraction: circles, triangles, lines and arcs floating against coloured fields. Vibrant, musical colour with clear Kandinsky signatures of cobalt blue, yellow, crimson and emerald green. An early shift from recognisable horses, riders and landscapes to non-representational compositions divided into three categories: Impressions, Improvisations and Compositions. A deeply spiritual approach to art — Kandinsky believed colour and form could carry emotional meaning directly, the way music does, without depicting anything.

## Career Timeline

### Russian and Bavarian Beginnings (1896–1908)

Symbolist and Jugendstil landscapes influenced by Russian folk art.

### Blue Rider (1911–1914)

Co-founded Der Blaue Reiter in Munich; wrote “Concerning the Spiritual in Art” (1911).

### Russian Return (1914–1921)

Back in Moscow during the Revolution; involved in cultural reform.

### Bauhaus Years (1922–1933)

Taught at the Bauhaus; geometric, grid-based “cold” period.

### Paris Years (1934–1944)

Biomorphic, playful late abstractions.

## Museums & Collections

- Lenbachhaus, Munich — the largest Kandinsky collection, based on the Gabriele Münter bequest.
- Centre Pompidou, Paris — major works from his Paris years.
- Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York — an extraordinary Kandinsky holding built by Hilla Rebay.
- Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow — early Russian works.
- Tate Modern, London.

## Famous Works to Know

- **Composition VII**
- **On White II**
- **Several Circles**
- **Yellow-Red-Blue**
- **Composition VIII**

## Artist's Own Words

*“Colour is a power which directly influences the soul.”*

## Why This Artist Is Difficult to Reproduce

Kandinsky's abstractions depend on precise geometric shapes floating at exact positions within coloured fields — a triangle tilted a degree off, or a circle an inch to the left, and the compositional balance he carefully worked out collapses. His colour relationships follow the theories he published; matching the hue and value of each element is essential, because the emotional content is in the colour logic itself. Brushwork is usually flat and even, giving no margin for error; there is nowhere for a sloppy reproduction to hide.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### What is Wassily Kandinsky best known for?

Founder of non-objective painting; geometric and biomorphic forms organised like music; colour-as-spiritual-language. Core subjects: Abstract.

### Where can I see original works by Wassily Kandinsky?

Lenbachhaus, Munich, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Museum of Modern Art, New York, State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, and others.

### Which paintings by Wassily Kandinsky are the most famous?

Composition VII, On White II, Several Circles, Yellow-Red-Blue, Composition VIII.

### Why are reproductions of Wassily Kandinsky difficult?

Kandinsky's abstractions depend on precise geometric shapes floating at exact positions within coloured fields — a triangle tilted a degree off, or a circle an inch to the left, and the compositional balance he carefully worked out collapses.

## Explore More

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This guide is a short companion to Wassily Kandinsky's page on TryArtwork, where you can find further notes on their life, style and most celebrated works.

[tryartwork.com/wassily-kandinsky](https://tryartwork.com/wassily-kandinsky)