

Kandinsky Vocabulary

Synesthesia (suh-nuhs-*thee*-zhuh) - a harmless genetic condition (neurological phenomenon) where one sense triggers a different sense, allowing for example, to hear colors, see music, taste words, or smell numbers. It literally means "joined perception". Scientists believe those with synesthesia may have more pathways between the sense areas in the brain or that their senses communicate in ways other people's do not. There are at least 60 different types of synesthesia, and it's estimated to occur in one out of every 5,000 individuals. Kandinsky could see colors when he heard music and heard music when he painted.

abstract art - noun |ab'strakt, 'ab, strakt|

art that does not attempt to represent external, recognizable reality but seeks to achieve its effect using shapes, forms, colors, and textures.

Is based on reality, but it doesn't look real.

expression - |ik'spreSHən| noun the process of making known one's thoughts or feelings. the conveying of feeling in the face or voice, in a work of art, or in the performance of a piece of music.

Atonal - |ā'tōnl| adjective Music
not written in any key or mode.

Colors

crimson - a rich deep red color inclining to purple

scarlet - a brilliant red color

ivory - a creamy-white color

sable - dark brown

vermilion - a brilliant red color

coral - the pinkish-red color of red coral

pistachio - a pale green color

garnet - deep red, similar in color to the pulp of a pomegranate

aqua - a light bluish-green color

ebony - a very dark brown or black color

cobalt - a deep blue color

saffron - an orange-yellow color

cerulean - a deep sky-blue color (from Latin *caeruleus* 'sky blue,')

charcoal - a dark gray color

Musical terms Kandinsky used in naming his paintings

Improvisation - created without preparation.

Composition - the action of putting things together; a work of music, literature, or art; the artistic arrangement of the parts of a picture.

Impression - in Music: a style of composition (associated esp. with Debussy) in which clarity of structure and theme is subordinate to harmonic effects, characteristically using the whole-tone scale.

in Art: a style or movement in painting originating in France in the 1860s, characterized by a concern with depicting the visual impression of the moment, esp. in terms of the shifting effect of light and color.

Accompaniment - a musical part that supports or partners a solo instrument, voice, or group; a piece of music played to complement or as background to an activity; something that is supplementary to or complements something else.

Movement - a principal division of a longer musical work, self-sufficient in terms of key, tempo, and structure; a change or development in something; from Latin *movere* 'to move.'

Three quotes by Vasily Kandinsky:

"I let myself go. I had little thought for houses and trees, drawing colored lines and blobs on the canvas with my palette knife, making them sing just as powerfully as I knew how."

"I could hear the hiss of the colors as they mingled."

"I saw all the colors in my mind; they stood before my eyes. Wild, almost crazy lines were sketched in front of me."

A tie to History:

The early years of the 20th Century brought terrific advances in the Physical Sciences as well. The Special (1905) and General (1916) Theories of Relativity and the advent of Quantum Mechanics (1926) changed our lives profoundly. Around the same years, a similar revolution took place in both Music and Art. The year 1909 marks a decisive break with tonality (the structure of classical music) by Arnold Schönberg in his "Three Piano Pieces". The term 'Atonality' is commonly used to refer to this new type of composition. Wassily Kandinsky is credited with painting the first 'purely abstract' works. They knew each other and have possibly influenced their works reciprocally.