



Wassily Kandinsky

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Vassily Vasilyevich Kandinsky

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: Wassily Kandinsky

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1866

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Russia

YEAR DIED: 1944

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: France

RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE AFFECTED EITHER THE ARTIST'S LIFE EXPERIENCE OR WORK BECAUSE IT/THEY PROVIDED A CHALLENGE AT THE TIME, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

He had a mix of ethnic origins. His mother was from Moscow while his father was from somewhere near Mongolia. His grandmother was from a place called Baltic, which had a German dialect. This gave him a variety of knowledge that could give perspective to things others might miss. According to his family, Kandinsky was a believer of the Catholic faith. He did not attend church regularly but was very spiritual. Complete abstraction was how he hoped to achieve a transcendent form of expressive communication. Kandinsky was integrated in Russia's cultural politics. This including art education and museum reform. His works were abstract and completely against what was considered "good" art. He loved Monet's work and wanted to use Expressionism to pursue his ideology. He was even included in a museum exhibition for those who were not allowed. He was well-informed because he was involved in a variety of subjects besides design.

DID THIS DESIGNER DO NOTABLE WORK IN FIELDS OTHER THAN WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED GRAPHIC DESIGN TODAY? EXPLAIN.

Art theory, which is something I struggle to connect with design. It is more philosophical and scientific than actual design. He also was largely a painter. I think that painting is also design because there is careful considerations for where colors and forms meet and how they interact. Certain colors and line-making communicate different things to different people.

LIST AT LEAST ONE OTHER WORK THAT IS NOT NAMED IN THIS TIMELINE FOR WHICH THIS DESIGNER IS WELL KNOWN. IF WORK CO-CREATED, LIST THE OTHERS INVOLVED.

Kandinsky's Composition VII is one of his most famous works and includes his spiritual take on painting. He believed music to be the best way to express emotion through sounds and colors.

EXPLAIN IF THIS FAME IS ONLY WITHIN DESIGN CIRCLES OR ANY OTHER SUBSET OF THE POPULATION.

With his fame came controversy. The Nazis confiscated many of his works since they did not conform to the clean-edged style accepted by Germany. In a way, he was infamous to the Nazi party because he went against the government's ideals.

DOES THIS WORK EXEMPLIFY ASPECTS EXPLAINED IN PREVIOUS QUESTIONS?

Yes, this work was emotional and used more than what was necessary to communicate. He used his background in music to present an ideal that he felt strongly about.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

He was most noted for his abstract paintings, which correlated with his design style. He believed that there was a strong spiritual connection within his art and used music as inspiration, expressing ideas in a clear and simple form.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

Outlawed by his homeland for his “formalist” abstractions and later mocked by the Nazi party, Kandinsky was indeed controversial. He rejected the materialistic view of the world that Russia had at the time and adopted the form and content approach. The utilitarianism of the Russian Enlightenment was probably a big contributor to Kandinsky’s beliefs. The attacks on his works eventually led him to Germany.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE MOST OFTEN USED BY THIS DESIGNER IN THE CREATION AND PRODUCTION OF WORK?

Paint was the medium that he used most often to create his works.

EXPLAIN THIS DESIGNER’S EDUCATION/TRAINING, INCLUDING ACADEMIC, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND /OR MENTORSHIPS.

In 1886 he studied at the University of Moscow. He studied economics and law. He attended a private school at Munich. The school was run by Anton Azbé. He enrolled in Franz von Stuck’s class at Munich Academy. There he received his diploma in 1900

DID THIS DESIGNER PROMOTE A SPECIFIC IDEOLOGY IN HIS/HER WORK? EXPLAIN.

Kandinsky was an abstract painter with roots in Impressionism. He wanted to meld emotions into his work without objectivity. A universal language of sorts, as seen in Bauhaus, was the ideology that drove him. Connecting art, spirituality, emotion, sound, and color led to him becoming one of the first modern abstract painters

WHY IS THIS DESIGNER VIEWED AS ICONIC IN THE HISTORY OF GRAPHIC DESIGN?

He is often described as the first modern (pure) abstract painter, but he was also a big part of the early years of Bauhaus along with Josef Albers and Paul Klee.

IS THERE ANY OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT THIS DESIGNER?

No.

YOUR NAME: Jodie Kelso

GIVE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS DESIGNER AND HIS/HER WORK. ALSO EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE, IF ANY, THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN. A LACK OF INFLUENCE MUST BE EXPLAINED.

I enjoy observing Kandinsky’s work, but I do not necessarily think that he has influenced my personal work. While my work is not always realistic, I tend to lean more towards clean design with pristine edges. I do, however, admire his visionary lifestyle. He and

his partners started a revolution in the design world. The Bauhaus brought together a multitude of disciplines and incorporated them in design. If it wasn't for the Bauhaus, art school would probably not be the same as it is now.

His work was emotional. With influence in Expressionism, he tried to convey the power of abstract colors. He believed that the inner life of the artist could come alive through nonfigurative art. Music was his biggest inspiration and comprised of expressive colors and shapes.

He started studying art later than most. At thirty years old, he decided to study painting and drawing in Munich. This was only professionally. He had an affinity for art at a young age, experimenting with colors in addition to his music. I can relate to the childhood interest in art, but it was not until fourth grade that I understood that I had any talent. I won my first art competition and was encouraged to participate in more my whole life. Unlike Kandinsky, my parents always wanted me to do what I enjoyed, even with art having the stigma of being a useless degree.

He is brave for changing careers from something more "prestigious." I did well in all subjects all my life, but I always felt that they were a bit dull. There was always a correct answer with no room for interpretation. I am always glad to see when art is not a field of study chosen by those not intelligent enough for traditional studies. Art and design studies are not only based in creativity, it is a study in problem-solving. Not everyone can do it. You must have an eye for it. This is why I respect Kandinsky's choice to study and teach the Arts rather than continue as a lawyer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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