

# KANDINSKY'S SENSE-ATIONAL ART

## Blog 'n' Craft Blueprint



**Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles**  
Wassily Kandinsky — Crayon, Watercolor, Gouache on Paper — 1913

“Color is a power  
which directly influences  
the soul.”

— Wassily Kandinsky

Learn all about  
a unique artist  
known for painting  
with his ears,  
rather than with his eyes.  
AND have oodles of fun  
hearing colors too!

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Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian-born Abstract Expressionist, often credited with painting one of the first purely abstract works of art. An Abstract Expressionist is an artist who portrays thoughts and emotions as nonrealistic art in response to real-life experiences — as opposed to other artists who choose to represent actual objects from real life.

• Therefore, Wassily Kandinsky was likely painting how things made him feel and not necessarily what he saw. Can you imagine painting

something you're thinking or how you're feeling, instead of painting what you see? This method is not typically how we think of creating art. Most artists paint what they see, not what they're thinking or how they're feeling.

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Perhaps one of Wassily Kandinsky's most well-known pieces of artwork is titled **Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles**. What makes it so special is the combination of all the spectacular and vibrant colors!

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Kandinsky often composed art while listening to music. Some art historians believe that Wassily Kandinsky always heard music while he created his art — even if there was no music playing in the room!

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For this particular work of art — it is thought that Kandinsky may have heard the colors he painted, within the music to which he listened. Being able to hear colors would suggest that Kandinsky may have also been a synesthete [sin-neh-steet]. This is a pretty unusual word — why don't you practice saying it a couple of times? Sin-neh-steet. Sin-neh-steet.

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A '**synesthete**' is — a person who cannot separate the five senses. Seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, and touching mingle with each other in uncommon ways. Similar

to the way in which Kandinsky may have seen colors when he heard music — synesthetes may hear a sound when they eat a certain food, taste flavor when they touch an object, or even feel a sensation when they smell an odor.

- Can you imagine having so many sense-ational sense combinations? In the case of Kandinsky, it is thought that he could see the elements of art — line, shape, form, space, texture, and color — when he heard sounds, specifically when he listened to music.

- If indeed his sense of hearing min-

a power which directly influences the soul.”

- While synesthesia is a rare and unusual condition, it's an interesting phenomenon that may very well have contributed to Kandinsky's art. We use the cleverly coined phrase 'sense-ational art' when we talk about a Kandinsky masterpiece because of the possibility he used more than just his sense of sight when creating his artwork.

- Aside from sight, if he were listening to music as he composed his artwork, Kandinsky would have also used his sense of hearing.

nately would have influenced the composition of his **Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles**.

Most people only use the sense of sight to see colors with their eyes — but Kandinsky may have been able to use the additional sense of hearing to 'see' and choose all the beautiful colors for this artwork.

- Just for fun — think about how each of these squares might sound if you could hear color. Perhaps you hear a bold symphony — or children singing whimsical nursery rhymes — or a galactic battle theme.

- **Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles** certainly is very colorful! You can see red — yellow — blue — green — orange — violet! As a matter of fact, Kandinsky used all the colors of the modern color wheel — and he even used some white!

- In this artwork, Wassily Kandinsky painted concentric circles within squares. Concentric circles are two or more circles which have the same center point. Kandinsky's circles certainly aren't perfectly round circles. Even though they are slightly misshapen, we still refer to them as concentric circles.

- What is most shocking about **Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles** is that although considered to be one of Wassily Kandinsky's most famous and recognizable works of art, it was not thought by the artist himself to be a piece of fine artwork! Kandinsky considered this painting a small color-theory study and a tool that he used in his studio when choosing colors for his other works of art.



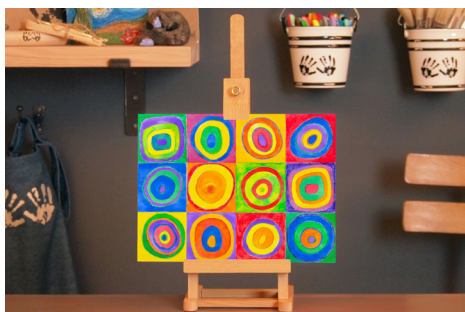
gled with his sense of sight — making it possible for him to hear the element of color — it could explain the sentiment behind Wassily Kandinsky's famous quote, "Colour is

- Painting on paper with water-colors, gouache [gu-ah-sh], and crayons — Kandinsky may very well have heard color when he created this iconic work of art in 1913. This phenomenon most defi-



- The following fun, hands-on artsy craft is designed to help you study color by painting concentric circles. You'll try painting based on what you hear with your ears rather than on what you see with your eyes — just like Wassily Kandinsky.

## Painted Concentric Art



Create **Painted Concentric Art** for hands-on fun studying color!

### MATERIALS

- Inspirational Music
- 7-1/2" x 10" White Cardstock
- Pan or Liquid Watercolor Paints\*
- Paintbrush
- Crayons
- No. 2 Pencil
- Ruler
- Container of Water



Everything you need to create **Painted Concentric Art**!

### DIRECTIONS

Play the inspirational music of your choice throughout the activity.

- Place the ruler along the 7-1/2"



**\*No paints on hand? NO PROBLEM!**

For a printable **Watercolor Recipe** check **Artsy Crafts Ideas!**  
[www.arttoknowwithmommyo.com](http://www.arttoknowwithmommyo.com)

side of the white cardstock. Then, using the No. 2 pencil, make a small mark at 2-1/2"; then, again at the 5" point. Place the ruler along the 10" side of the paper. Make a small mark at 2-1/2"; then, again at the 5" point; and finally at 7-1/2". Now draw lines from each edge of the paper to the other, so that you divide the paper into 12 equal squares.



Sketch your concentric circles, using the pencil, within each square.

- You may trace over your pencil lines using the crayons if you wish. Using crayons will help keep the watercolors from bleeding into one and other. Allowing the watercolors to bleed is not a bad thing and can provide an interesting artist effect. If you wish the different colors to blend between each circle, do not use crayons to separate the watercolors.

- Crayon creates a waxy surface, which prevents the paints from saturating the paper. Bear in mind that wherever you choose to use crayon, the watercolor paints will

neither stick to the wax nor penetrate to the paper, therefore will not be visible.



Listening to your inspirational music, color and paint the concentric circles within one square at a time. **\*Tip:** If you're right-handed; work from left to right to keep your hand out of the wet paint. If you're left-handed; work from right to left.

- Using a paintbrush dipped in the watercolor of your choice, paint the smallest circle within the consecutive circles. Then, using different colors — based on what you hear — paint the other circles within the first rectangle. **\*Tip:** Be sure to clean your paintbrushes each time you change colors.

- Repeat the previous step with your watercolors, until you are completely satisfied with the color of each of your concentric circles.



Notice that Kandinsky also used some white in his artwork. This

too is an option for you, by simply leaving some paper showing.

After you have completed your watercolor artwork, allow it to dry on a flat surface for one hour. Once it's dry, add your **Painted Concentric Art** to your collection of refrigerator art — paying hom-



age to the spirit of Abstract Expressionist Wassily Kandinsky and his **Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles**. This artwork will certainly provide a lovely splash of color to any kitchen!



### SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY!

Post a picture of your artsy craft on social media using **#fineartfunart**.

### WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

Abstract ✓ Color ✓ Green ✓ Red ✓ Synesthete ✓  
Blue ✓ Concentric ✓ Orange ✓ Russian ✓ Wassily ✓  
Circles ✓ Expressionism ✓ Purple ✓ Senses ✓ Yellow ✓



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## Word Search Puzzle Fun

Find and circle all the words listed below as you test your knowledge of *Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles* by the world-famous Abstract Expressionist, Wassily Kandinsky!

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D W A A M A E X M C K J S B C  
C J P S F U I T S U E Y R E W  
C O N C E N T R I C V U T D C  
A O O B S S F U N D S E W J N  
J B L I N J N J O S H G A S E  
B U S I Y E G E I T S R S D K  
E L O T G O X A S D F E S T X  
U R H N R R N E S W H E I Z I  
B Z A P U A N F E O H N L T F  
P R N G N Y C M R L S J Y F J  
O C B U S Z N T P L C D E R J  
P U R P L E I D X E E O H I G  
R L Z V H P O I E Y O X L W F  
V P I G N D B G G F H P K O H  
W S V G J Y S E L C R I C Y R

**Abstract**  
**Blue**  
**Circles**

**Color**  
**Concentric**  
**Expressionism**

**Green**  
**Orange**  
**Purple**

**Red**  
**Russian**  
**Senses**

**Synesthete**  
**Wassily**  
**Yellow**