

German Expressionism: Der Blaue Reiter

“Today we are searching for things in nature that are hidden behind the veil of appearance... We look for and paint this inner, spiritual side of nature.” – Franz Marc



Founded in Munich in 1911 *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider) was one of the two pioneering movements of German Expressionism. It was in effect an abstract counterpart to *Die Brücke*'s distorted figurative style.

While the works of both groups confronted feelings of alienation within an increasingly modernizing world, *Der Blaue Reiter* sought to transcend the mundane elements of daily life, that were typical of *Die Brücke* subjects, by applying the metaphysical, abstract elements of composition and colour, thereby pursuing the spiritual value of art.

Initiated by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc it was international in its membership. Two exhibitions were held in Munich in 1911 and 1912 as well as travelling exhibitions in German and other European cities. It came to an end in 1914 due to the onset of the First World War.

Paving the way

“Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul.” – Kandinsky

Wassily KANDINSKY (1866-1944) was a Russian painter and art theorist, generally credited as one of the pioneers of abstraction in Western art. Born in Moscow, he spent his childhood in Odessa, Ukraine, where he graduated from Odessa Art School. He studied law and economics at the University of Moscow. After graduating in 1892 Kandinsky married his cousin, Anja Chimiakin, and became a lecturer on Jurisprudence at the University of Moscow. He was subsequently offered a Professorship of Roman Law in Estonia—which he declined.

In 1889 at age 23 he was part of an ethnographic research group which travelled to the Vologda region north of Moscow. In his reminiscences, *Looks on the Past*, he relates that the houses and churches were decorated with such shimmering colours that upon entering them, he felt that he was moving into a painting. This experience, and his study of the region's folk art (particularly the use of bright colours on a dark background), were reflected in much of his early work.



Kandinsky - 1913

In 1896, at the age of 30, before leaving Moscow for Munich, to begin studying art (life-drawing, sketching and anatomy) Kandinsky saw an exhibition of Monet. A picture of *Haystacks* was a revelation, giving him a powerful sense of colour almost independent of the objects themselves. He recalled later:



“That it was a haystack the catalogue informed me. I could not recognise it. This non-recognition was painful to me. I considered that the painter had no right to paint indistinctly. I dully felt that the object of the painting was missing. And I noticed with surprise and confusion that the picture not only gripped me, but impressed itself ineradicably on my memory. Painting took on a fairy-tale power and splendour.”

He was not immediately granted admission at the Munich Academy and began learning art on his own. When admitted his teachers would eventually include Franz von Stuck (1863-1928).

In 1901 he founded the Phalanx School of Painting, in Munich, along with two other artists. The aim was to introduce new art and ideas to the conservative public of Munich. The twelve exhibitions that were held in three years, which included presentations of the works of Monet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Signac and Vallotton, were greeted with a mixture of indifference and outrage. Kandinsky took the decision to close the association in 1904.

His early work was influenced by the prevailing Jugendstil style. *Akhtyrka* (1901) painted in thick layers—in areas possibly applied with a knife—is an impressionistic representation of a landscape with a deep, receding perspective. The colours of the lawn, the trees turning to autumn tints, the reflections in the lake, have a natural feel. The scene appears bathed in a glowing light: the narrow sliver of sky at the top is a yellowish hue with patches of cloud, perhaps indicating the lambent flush of evening.



Gabriele Münter, a student at Phalanx, became his pupil, intimate companion, and critic until they separated in 1914. In the summer of 1902, at Kandinsky's invitation, she joined him at his summer painting classes just south of Munich in the Alps.



A small cloaked figure on a speeding horse is rushing through a rocky meadow in *The Blue Rider* (1903), which was painted heavily under the influence of Impressionism.

The rider's cloak is a medium blue. The horse and rider cast a darker-blue shadow on the hillside. Across the foreground are the more amorphous blue shadows of trees behind the viewer, the counterparts of the autumn trees in the background. The blue rider in the painting is prominent (but not clearly defined), and the horse has an unnatural gait—a long stride as was customary in the representation of galloping horses, before photography. This intentional disjunction, allowing viewers to participate in the creation of the artwork, became an increasingly conscious technique used by Kandinsky in subsequent

years; it culminated in the abstract works of the 1911–1914 period. In *The Blue Rider*, Kandinsky shows the rider more as a series of colours than in specific detail.



Painted in small strokes from a loaded brush, forming an overall mosaic effect, *Sunday, Old Russia* (1904) betrays a distant influence of the divisionist technique which he learnt from his teacher Anton Azbe (1862–1905) in whose studio he also learnt anatomy when he left Russia for Munich. Kandinsky was fascinated by the old Russian folk tales and the pageantry of Medieval history. Here he recreates a highly colourful (and fanciful) view of peasants and nobles in front of the walls of a town

From 1904 to 1905 Kandinsky and Münter travelled across Europe to Holland, Italy and to North Africa, followed by an extended stay in Paris from 1906 to 1907, then wintering in Berlin for six months, finally returning to Munich in the summer of 1908. In mid June accompanied by Marianne von Werefkin and Alexej von Jawlensky, they discovered the Bavarian village of Murnau on the shores of lake Staffel, some fifty miles to the south, from then on dividing much of their time between there and Munich.



In the summers up to the outbreak of the First World War they lived in Murnau in a house purchased by Gabrielle Münter in 1909, although Kandinsky was still married to his first wife. The house became a place of life, conversation, and creativity. From 1931 Münter lived in the house until her death in 1962. During the years of National socialism an 'inestimable treasury' of works, mainly by Kandinsky, but also hers and other blue rider works were hidden and safeguarded in the basement.

After a recent restoration 'to its original condition of the period 1909 to 1914. And richly furnished with paintings, prints, and reverse glass paintings by Kandinsky and Münter, with folk art they collected and items of furniture they painted' it is now open to the public.

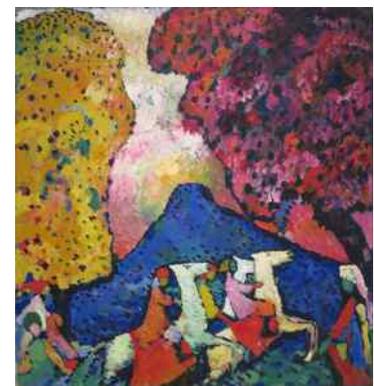
Murnau: Houses in the Obermarkt (1908) depicts the main street of the Bavarian town, seen from a shady side street. The overall tonality is dark, with the brighter, more colourful houses, flatly painted in parallel to the picture plane. As an earlier work from this period the influence of the Fauve paintings Kandinsky had seen in Paris in 1906 and 1907, is still apparent. The small size of the painting and the broad freely handled paint surface make it probable that the picture was painted *en plein air* in a single session; and the locality has changed very little, so that it is possible to identify the exact the point where the artist must have placed his easel. At this time Kandinsky's stylistic evolution was rapid and decisive as he moved towards total abstraction.



The foreground of **Munich-Schwabing with the Church of St. Ursula** (1908), which takes up the lower two thirds of the picture, depicts a field rendered in the complementary colours of red–green, blue–orange and yellow–purple(ish). Highly and un-naturally coloured we only interpret it as a field from the buildings in the background, themselves depicted in none-natural or heightened colours, and the tiny, sketched-in figures at rest near the bottom edge. Isolated from these elements it would be pure abstraction, without reference to an aspect of the real world. The 'orchestration' of the coloured patches into a recognisable scene is solely due to their expected, 'readable' position in the structure of the picture (eg. the ragged, creamy white and pinkish shape at the top left which reads as cloud in a blue sky), so that our sensory experience of the work is one of pure joy, uninhibited by descriptive interpretation.

For Kandinsky, blue was the colour of spirituality: the darker the blue, the more it awakened human desire for the eternal.

The Blue Mountain (1908–1909) is divided into four areas: the sky, the red tree, the yellow tree, and the blue mountain with the three riders, lying in distinct planes across the surface, with the lower one slightly in advance, like theatre flats, showing Kandinsky's Fauvist influence and increasing tendency toward abstraction. A mountain of blue is flanked by two broad trees, one yellow and one red, dramatically introducing the three primary colours. A procession, with three riders and figures on foot, crosses at the bottom; the rearing forelegs of the horses giving the impression of galloping. The faces, clothing, and saddles of the riders are each denoted with a single colour, and without indications of naturalism and detail. The broad use of colour in *The Blue Mountain* illustrates Kandinsky's inclination toward an art in which colour is presented independently of form, and in which each colour is given equal value.



"The deeper the blue becomes, the more strongly it calls man towards the infinite, awakening in him a desire for the pure and, finally, for the supernatural... The brighter it becomes, the more it loses its sound, until it turns into silent stillness and becomes white."—Kandinsky



Dorfstrasse, Murnau (1908)



Houses at Murnau (1909)



Murnau, Train and Castle (1909)



Johannisstrasse Murnau



Houses in Munich (1908)



Street in Murnau with Women (1908)

"As I came to Munich in 1901 it was in a period of great artistic renewal. Jugendstil began in its way to attack the old naturalism, and to cultivate the qualities of pure line."—Münter

Gabriele MÜNTER (1877–1962) was born to upper middle-class parents in Berlin. She began to draw as a child, her family supporting her desires to become an artist. Her father died in 1886. In 1897, at the age of twenty, Münter received artistic training in the Düsseldorf studio of artist Ernst Bosch (1834–1917) and later, in 1901, at the *Damenschule* (Women's School) where she attended the beginners' classes of Maximilian Dasio (1865–1954) and with artist Willy Spatz (1861–1931). Also in 1901 she joined the Phalanx School in Munich, where she studied woodcut techniques, sculpture, painting, and printmaking.

Her childhood and early adulthood greatly impacted her future artistic career. She had a free and unrestricted life that was unconstrained by convention.

By the time she was 21 years old, both of her parents had died and she was living at home with no occupation. In 1898 she and her sister, both having inherited a large amount of money, allowing them to live freely and independently, decided to take a trip to America to visit their extended family, travelling and staying for two years. Six sketchbooks survive from Münter's period in America, depicting images of people, plants and landscapes.

In 1901, she attended the beginners' classes at the Munich Women Artists's Association. The official art academies were closed to women so she studied at Kandinsky's Phalanx School, where she was introduced to Post-Impressionism and the marking techniques of a palette knife and a brush. Her vivid colours and bold outlines somewhat derived from Gauguin and fauvism. She was also inspired by Bavarian folk art. Kandinsky was the first teacher to take Münter's painting abilities seriously. She worked in various media, including a significant output in wood- and linocuts. She kept a journal and documented her journeys with a state-of-the-art camera.

She enjoyed exploring the world of children; using colourful prints of children and toys, Münter showed precision and simplicity of form in her rejection of symbolic content.

From 1906-1907 Kandinsky and Münter spent time in the Paris suburb of Sèvres. They both exhibited works in the *Salon des Independents* and the *Salon d'Automne*. Their relationship affected Kandinsky's work as he began to adopt Münter's use of saturated colours.



Self-Portrait c.1908-09



Promenade along the Seine (c. 1904)

She said of her studies with Kandinsky:

“At first I experienced great difficulty with my brushwork – I mean with what the French call *la touche de pinceau*. So Kandinsky taught me how to achieve the effects that I wanted with a palette knife... My main difficulty was I could not paint fast enough. My pictures are all moments of life – I mean instantaneous visual experiences, generally noted very rapidly and spontaneously. When I begin to paint, it's like leaping suddenly into deep waters, and I never know beforehand whether I will be able to swim. Well, it was Kandinsky who taught me the technique of swimming. I mean that he has taught me to work fast enough, and with enough

self-assurance, to be able to achieve this kind of rapid and spontaneous recording of moments of life.” (Reinhold Heller, *Gabriele Münter: The Years of Expressionism 1903–1920*.)

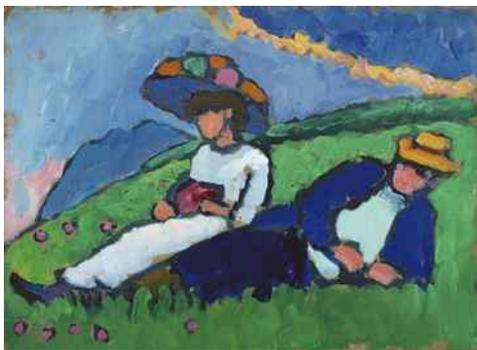
The German Expressionists moved towards primitive art as a model of abstraction or non-representational, non-academic, non-bourgeois art.

It was in Münter's landscape paintings, that she emphasized nature, imaginative landscapes and an opposition to German modernism. Colour plays a significantly large role in Münter's early works. Her landscapes are unusual in their use of blues, greens, yellows, and pinks. She presents the village and countryside as manifestations of human life, in an interaction and coexistence with nature.

For Münter, it is the use of colour that expresses her interest in painting the spirit of the modern civilization, its social and political turmoil and its gravitation towards materialism and alienation.



The Yellow House (1908)



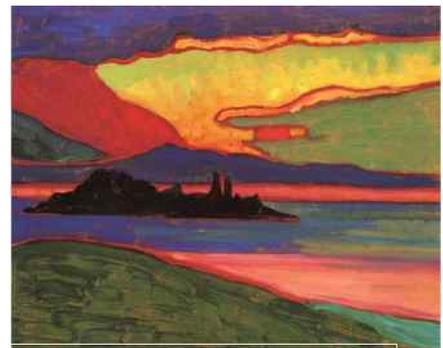
Jawlensky and Werefkin (1908-09)

There is a transition in Münter's work from copying nature more or less impressionistically to feeling its content, abstracting, and drawing out an extract. There grew an Münter noted that pictures are all moments of life: instantaneous visual experiences, generally rapid and spontaneous; her paintings each have their own identity, their own shape, and their own function.

The German Expressionists moved towards primitive art as a model of abstraction or non-representational, non-academic, non-bourgeois art, looking not for harmony of outward appearance, but for the mystery hidden behind the external form. He (or she) was interested in the soul of things, wanting to lay it bare.

In 1911 Münter was one of the first artists to exhibit with *Der Blaue Reiter* group. She contributed six paintings to the first exhibition, and 14 to the second. Within the group, artistic approaches and aims varied amongst artists; however, they shared a common desire to express spiritual truths through art. They championed modern art, the connection between visual art and music, the spiritual and symbolic associations of colour and a spontaneous, intuitive approach to painting in its move toward abstraction.

When World War I began, Münter and Kandinsky relocated to Switzerland. In 1914, Kandinsky returned to Russia without her. Their relationship worsened due to mutual tensions and disappointments over his lack of commitment to marriage. His marriage in 1917 to Nina Andreevskaya marked the end of Münter and Kandinsky's relationship. Subsequently, there was a period of inactivity in her



Sunset over Staffelsee (1908-1911)

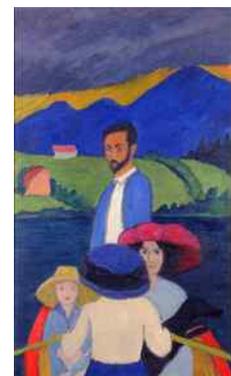
art career. She returned a number of paintings and drawings to Kandinsky, and stored other pieces in a warehouse for many years. After the war, she resumed painting in the late 1920s following her move back to Germany with the philosopher and art historian Johannes Eichner (1886-58), and with whom she formed a more permanent relationship. From 1931 they lived in the Mütter house. He looked after her business affairs and helped to promote and preserve hers and Kandinsky's work.



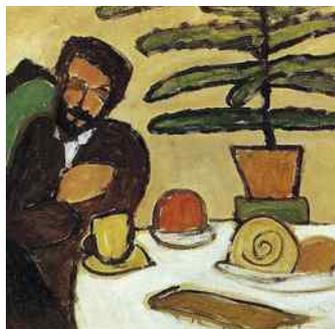
The Evening (1909)



Landscape with sunflowers (1910)



Boating (1910)



Man at the Table



Kandinsky and Erma Bossi at the Table in the Murnau House (1912)



Staffelsee in Autumn (1923)



Self-Portrait in a Sailor Blouse (1893)

Marianne von WEREFKIN (1860-1938) was of old Russian aristocracy. Her father was of Russian nobility whose ancestors came from Moscow, and her mother belonged to an old family of Cossack princes,

At age fourteen Werefkin's talent for drawing was discovered and she immediately received academic drawing lessons. As a teenager she had a large studio in the Peter and Paul Fortress and an atelier on her family's summer estate in Lithuania.

In 1880, Werefkin became a private student of Ilya Repin, the most important representative of the *Peredvizhniki* ("wandering painters"), who represented Russian Realism. Through Repin, Werefkin came into contact with other

artists and teachers. In 1888, Repin created the **Portrait of Marianne Werefkin** showing her arm in a sling, having suffered a hunting accident in which she accidentally shot her right hand, the painter's hand.

Werefkin's first artistically important work phase was before 1890 when she made a name for herself in the realistic painting as the "Russian Rembrandt" of the Tsarist Empire. After 1890, Werefkin modernized her painting style and switched to *en plein air* painting with traits of Eastern European Impressionism.

In 1892 Werefkin entered into a 27-year relationship with Alexej von Jawlensky, at the time a penniless military officer who was five years her junior. Werefkin was more advanced in painting than Jawlensky and had decided to train and support him.

After the death of her father, in 1896, Werefkin was provided with a noble Tsarist pension of 7,000 rubles per annum, corresponding at that time to around twenty-two thousand German marks. She and Jawlensky moved to Munich with her 11-year old lady's maid Helene Nesnakomoff, who had come to the Werefkin's



household at age 9, after the death of the child's stepfather (a local police officer) leaving the unreliable mother, who drank heavily, with three children as a beggar.



In Munich in her 'pink salon,' she gathered around her in 1897 a number of artists calling the group the "Brotherhood of St. Luke", after the Evangelist St. Luke, the patron saint of artists, and often depicted painting the Virgin and Child, as in this **16th century Russian Icon**.

Early in 1909 she founded the N.K.V.M. (*The Neue Künstlervereinigung München*), a precursor of *Der Blaue Reiter*. Kandinsky was elected as chairman, but resigned in 1911 when asked to produce "preferably understandable works." They held three exhibitions which travelled to up to nine different venues. Picasso and Braque were among the invited exhibitors to the second exhibition.

In 1908 Kandinsky bought a copy of *Thought Forms* by Annie Besant and Charles Leadbetter. In 1909 he joined the Theosophical Society.

The **Theosophical Society** is the organizational body of Theosophy, an esoteric new religious movement. It was founded in New York City, U.S. in 1875. Among its founders were Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), a Russian mystic and the principal thinker of the Theosophy movement, and Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), the society's first president. It draws upon a wide array of influences among them older European philosophies and movements such as Neoplatonism and occultism, as well as parts of Asian religious traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Article one of the Constitution declares the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity



Theosophical theory postulates that creation is a geometrical progression, beginning with a single point. The creative aspect of the form is expressed by a descending series of circles, triangles, and squares.

Thought-Forms: A Record of Clairvoyant Investigation is a theosophical book compiled by the members of the Theosophical Society A. Besant (1847-1943) and C.W. Leadbetter (1854-1934). It was originally published in 1905 in London. From the standpoint of Theosophy, it relates opinions regarding the visualization of thoughts, experiences, emotions and music. Drawings of the "thought-forms" were performed by John Varley Jr. (grandson of the painter John Varley), Prince, and McFarlane.



Meaning of colour

The authors of *Thought Forms* write that they, like many theosophists, are convinced that "thoughts are things," and the task of their book is to help the reader understand this. The frontispiece of the book contains a table "The meanings of colours" of thought-forms and human aura associated with feelings and emotions, beginning with "High Spirituality" (light blue—in the upper left corner) and ending by "Malice" (black—in the lower right corner), 25 colours in all. The authors argue that human aura is "the outer part of the cloud-like substance of his higher bodies, interpenetrating each other, and extending beyond the confines of his physical body." The mental and desire and bodies (two human higher bodies) are "those chiefly concerned with the appearance of what are called thought-forms."

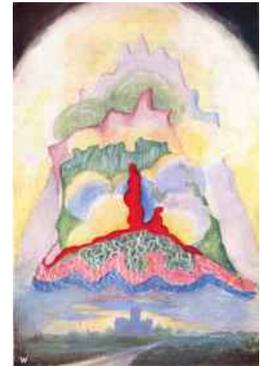
The authors write that the images in the book "are not imaginary forms, prepared as some dreamer thinks that they ought to appear." Rather, "they are representations of forms actually observed as thrown off by ordinary men and women." And the authors sincerely hope that they will force the reader to "realise the nature and power of his thoughts, acting as a stimulus to the noble, a curb on the base." It is worth noting that the scientific community in general regard 'thought forms' a pseudoscience based on concepts of extra-sensory perception.

According to American academic professor Robert S. Elwood the book by Besant and Leadbeater had a profound influence on modern art. "It suggested, to a world moving rapidly beyond the literalism of Victorian

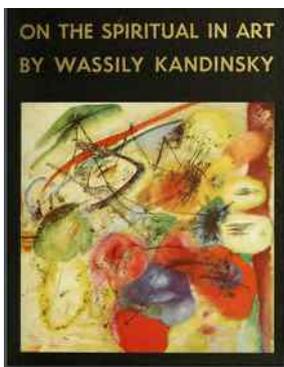
art, the expression in painting of surreal forms and forces underlying, but different from, the visible world." *Thought-Forms* demonstrated how the symbolism of "astral colours and forms" can express the specificity of "certain soul's and mental states." It had a great influence on Kandinsky as one of the essential factors that led to the "genius opening of new perspectives for painting."

On describing Plate W, "**Seeing**" of music - overture to *Meistersingers*, reflecting a musical form "created" by Wagner, the authors note in it the likeness to the "successively retreating" ramparts of a mountain, "and it is heightened by the billowy masses of cloud which roll between the crags and give the effect of perspective."

The illustrations by Varley had an impact on Kandinsky, who was similarly influenced during this period by Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin* which, he felt, pushed the limits of music and melody beyond standard lyricism.



"Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures."—Kandinsky



In 1910 Kandinsky published *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, his defence and promotion of abstract art, and an affirmation that all forms of art were equally capable of reaching a level of spirituality. Arguing that art should be freed from its traditional role of representation, he believed that colour, line and shape could be used in a painting as something autonomous, apart from the visual description of an object or other form, and able to communicate directly the spiritual life of the artist. His belief that civilisation was moving away from a 'materialist' concept of life towards a more 'spiritualised' one implies that the insights of art are as valid as those of science.

The treatise is considered a manifesto of modern art, having a great influence on the direction of twentieth century art. In it he said:

"The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape."

"Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.."

"Art is the lie that enables us to realize the truth. "Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time."

"The palette, product of the components that make up a painting, is itself often more beautiful than any painting. It should be appreciated for the pleasure it produces. It seems to me that the living soul of colours emits a musical sound when the inflexible will of the artist's brush snatches part of their life away. Sometimes I hear the colours whispering as they mix: it is like a mysterious experience surprisingly occurring during the magical experiments of an alchemist."



Landscape With Factory Chimney (1910)



Improvisation No. 3 (1909) was inspired by the City of Tunis, which Kandinsky had visited in 1904. A knight on a blue horse, an evocation of Saint George, the spiritual guide and alter ego of the artist, begins to mount a ridge leading to a fortress. The rider's orange cloak spreads out behind him, echoing the curve of the horse's back as it rears up. The sky is flaming red and a red patch with a white halo behind the rider and the castle wall, suggests a setting sun and the coming of evening. Two female (?) figures at the far left of the scene are barely discernible against the abstracted trees and hills. Although given a none-descriptive title this early work in his *Improvisation*

series suggests an episode from Russian folk-tales, with which Kandinsky was familiar from his youth.

In the painting all elements contribute to the sense of restless movement; from the horse and rider to the 'static' architectural features of bridge and fortress. The sense of total movement is Kandinsky's unique contribution to abstract art, and a characteristic of all his work up to the final post-Bauhaus phase.

Kandinsky's creation of abstract work followed a long period of development and maturation of intense thought based on his artistic experiences. He called this devotion to inner beauty, fervour of spirit, and spiritual desire, and his painting according to *inner necessity*.

He recorded another revelation, having as profound effect on him as the 'Monet' episode: returning home one day he saw a painting propped against the wall; not recognising the subject he nevertheless found it "of extraordinary beauty, glowing with inner radiance". Then realising that it was one of his own paintings upside down it suggested to him the potential power of abstraction.

Blue Rider Period (1911–1914)

The name of the movement is the title of the painting that Kandinsky created in 1903, but it is unclear whether it is the origin of the name of the movement, as the title of the painting had been overwritten. Kandinsky wrote 20 years later that the name is derived from Marc's enthusiasm for horses and his own love of riders, combined with a shared love of the colour blue.

Lyrical (1911) further abstracts the horse and rider into a few curved lines. The double arched curve of the rider's head and back is repeated in many works of the period, sometimes suggesting hills or banks of trees, evidence of his non-material, spiritualising of line and form. Remnants of the flowing lines of the horse may also be encountered in other works.



Kandinsky's paintings from this period are large, expressive coloured masses evaluated independently from forms and lines; these serve no longer to delimit them, but overlap freely to form paintings of extraordinary force. Music was important to the birth of abstract art, since music is abstract by nature—it does not try to represent the exterior world, but expresses in an immediate way the inner feelings of the soul. Kandinsky sometimes used musical terms to identify his works; he called his most spontaneous paintings "improvisations" and described more elaborate works as "compositions."



Composition IV (1911) depicts cossacks in an abstracted landscape. The composition is dominated by two black lines, representing lances, dividing the painting into two parts. The orange hands grasping the lances and the heads of the cossacks can be discerned, alongside a third cossack with a sabre. Upper left the image of the leaping horse which appears in *Lyrical*, even more reduced here to a mere hieroglyph, leaps up from the blue outline of a hill surmounted by the outline of a fortress. A rainbow bridges gap between the hill and the jagged hillside from which more lances protrude. In the top left corner

are two more red hatted cossacks. Another jagged peak appears on the right and the elongated, curved forms of two blue-hatted cossacks. It is possible that the subject references Moscow during the revolutionary period of 1904-05.

Untitled (The first abstract watercolour) formally dated 1910, but believed by historians to be dated 1913 by Kandinsky, is a page of blots, ink lines and smudges of colour, often grouped into 'constellations' of forms. Although most likely created as an un-composed experiment or research in mark-making, the final result does have an overall sense of cohesion, with an implied diagonal sweeping up in a shallow S line from the lower left to upper right corners, counterbalanced by its opposite, upper left to lower right movement, with an 'island' of forms at its crossing point capped by a blue 'cloud' shape.



In *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* Kandinsky defined three types of painting; *impressions*, *improvisations* and *compositions*. While impressions are based on an external reality that serves as a starting point, improvisations and compositions depict images emergent from the unconscious, though *composition* is developed from a more formal point of view.



As his painting became more colourful so it became increasingly abstract and more detached from references to particular elements in the landscape and specific sites that we might recognise. As in *Improvisation 27 (Garden of Love II)* of 1912 his marks and blocks of colour range freely across his invented spaces. A few symbolic forms – an arc representing a hill or mountain, a curve the line of motion of a horses back, an upright representing a tower: images drawn up from the well of folk tales and medieval stories of his childhood – are sufficient to summon up his mythological landscape. In titling his paintings *Improvisation* and *Composition*, adopting musical terminology, he further detaches his paintings from the visible world.

Landscape with Red Spots II is the second of two very similar paintings produced in 1913. Hills, his characteristic rounded and jagged forms, and suggestions of buildings proliferate. Prominently shown is an elongated geometrical form, arising from behind a roofed building, a recollection of the village church of Saint Nikolaus in Murnau and its prominent round tower. The eponymous red spots are at the foot of the tower. A deep red and a blue patch of paint at the bottom edge may suggest figures; while the whole is bathed in a silvery 'atmosphere' which condenses the main elements towards the centre.



“Lend your ears to music, open your eyes to painting, and... stop thinking! Just ask yourself whether the work has enabled you to 'walk about' into a hitherto unknown world. If the answer is yes, what more do you want?”—Kandinsky



Study for Improvisation V (1910)

Wassily Kandinsky revolutionized the artistic visualization of sound. His paintings strove to mirror the expressive power of music and he often spoke of them in terms of musical vocabulary—harmonics, vibrations, and chords of colour. This synaesthetic mode was emboldened in 1911 when he heard Arnold Schoenberg's "3 Klavierstücke Op. 11. No. 3" performed in Munich. It's fitting that this particular Schoenberg piece made such an impact on Kandinsky because it marked the composer's cutting of ties with tonality in favour of seeking new horizons of sound—vibrant spaces where expression ruled supreme. Captivated, Kandinsky followed suit and created a series titled Improvisations, which channelled his sonic epiphanies into evocative paintings.

His *Compositions* are primarily concerned with evoking a spiritual resonance in viewer and artist. Kandinsky puts the viewer in the situation of experiencing these epic myths by translating them into contemporary terms (with a sense of desperation, flurry, urgency, and confusion). This spiritual communion of viewer-painting-artist/prophet may be described within the limits of words and images.

Composition VI (1913) is the result of 24 studies, it took the painter eight months to complete the large painting, of three metres in width. He wanted to depict a flood, a baptism and the theme of destruction and



rebirth. After outlining the work on a mural-sized wood panel, he became blocked and could not go on. Gabriele Münter told him that he was trapped in his intellect and not reaching the true subject of the picture. She advised him to break free from the initial outline and think about the German word *Überflut* (flood) and the acoustic sensations it suggested to him. Kandinsky completed the work within three days, intoning the word like a mantra.

Composition VI was the artist's main entry for the First German Autumn Salon, organized in 1913 in Berlin by Herwarth Walden alongside painters such as August Macke and Franz Marc.



Herwarth Walden (actual name **Georg Lewin**; 1879 – 1941) was a German expressionist artist and art expert in many disciplines. He is broadly acknowledged as one of the most important discoverers and promoters of German avant-garde art in the early twentieth century—Expressionism, Futurism, Dadaism, Magic Realism. He was best known as the founder of the Expressionist magazine *Der Sturm* (The Storm) in 1910, and its offshoots.

He studied piano and composition, becoming a musician, composer, writer, critic, and gallery owner, discovering and promoting several young artists and poets in the early twentieth century.

The Blaue Reiter Almanac was published early in 1912. Edited by Kandinsky and Marc it reproduced over 140 artworks, with 14 major articles in an edition of 1,100 copies. Its costs were underwritten by the industrialist and art collector Bernhard Koehler, a relative of Macke.

A second edition was planned but it was disrupted by the start of the Second World War, when the group was disbanded.

Theorising with composer Arnold Schoenberg Kandinsky expressed the communion between artist and viewer as being available to both the senses and the mind (synesthesia).

In his articles in the *Almanac* Kandinsky perceived a kinaesthetic relationship between colour and sound. Hearing tones and chords as he painted, in what he described as sound tones, each colour had a pitch and volume. Yellow, whose characteristic was excitement, was connected to loud, sharp sounds, the colour of middle C on a brassy trumpet; Blue, the colour of peace and spirituality, was richer, and deep blues had a more sustained sound tone. Black is the colour of



Kandinsky, Cover of *Der Blaue Reiter Almanac*, (c.1912)



Composition VII (1913)
(200 cm. x 302 cm.)

closure, and the end of things; and that combinations of colours produce vibrational frequencies, akin to chords played on a piano. In 1871 the young Kandinsky learned to play the piano and cello. He suggested that hues of varying saturation corresponded to the timbres of specific instruments, where red was the strong, forceful playing of a trumpet fanfare or a high, clear violin, and green was a gentle violin played at middle position.

Kandinsky also developed a theory of geometric figures and their relationships—claiming, for example, that the circle is the most peaceful shape and represents the human soul. These theories are explained in *Point and Line to Plane*.



Murnau with a Church (1910)



Cow, (1910)



Picture with a Black Arch (1912)



Squares with Concentric Circles (1913)



Painting with a Red Stain (1914)



In Grey (1919)

At the outbreak of war in 1914 Kandinsky returned to Russia., having separated from Gabrielle Münter. From 1918 to 1921 he was involved in the cultural politics of Russia and collaborated in art education and museum reform, returning to Germany in 1923.

“Today we are searching for things in nature that are hidden behind the veil of appearance... We look for and paint this inner, spiritual side of nature.”—Marc

Franz MARC (1880-1916) was a painter and printmaker, one of the key figures of German Expressionism. He was co-editor of the Blue Rider Almanac. His father was a professional landscape painter.

After serving in the military for a year, in 1900, he began studies at the Academy of fine Arts, Munich. In 1903 and 1907, he spent time in France, particularly in Paris, visiting the museums in the city and copying many paintings, a traditional way for artists to study and develop technique. In Paris, Marc frequented artistic circles, meeting numerous artists. He discovered a strong affinity for the work of Vincent van Gogh. After the first Paris trip he ceased attending the Academy of Fine Arts.

In 1906, Marc travelled with his elder brother Paul, a Byzantine expert, to Thessaloniki, Mount Athos and various other Greek locations. In 1910, Marc developed an important friendship with the August Macke.



Macke, *Portrait of Franz Marc* (1910)



It is often thought that Marc considered animals to be more pure and more beautiful than humans and, therefore, his paintings represent a pantheistic understanding of the divine or of spirituality. As his painting matured animals became the main subject matter of Marc's work.

Deer in the Reeds (1909), painted in an Impressionistic style, shows the two deer in lively, naturalistic poses.

Swiss painter Jean Bloé Niestlé (1884–1942) urged Marc to "capture the essence of the animal." According to art historian Gabi La Cava, for Marc, "the feeling that is evoked by the subject matter is most important"—more so than zoological accuracy.

Most of his mature work portrays animals, usually in natural settings. His work is characterized by bright primary colour, an almost cubist portrayal of animals, stark simplicity and a profound sense of emotion. Even in his own time, his work attracted notice in influential circles. Marc gave an emotional meaning or purpose to the colours he used in his work: blue was used to portray masculinity and spirituality, yellow represented feminine joy, and red encased the sound of violence.

Horse in Landscape (1910) equates the curved lines of the horse's back with the swelling forms of the landscape so that the animal and it's surroundings become merged into one pantheistic vision of nature.





The **Large Blue Horses** (1911) is one of Marc's earliest major works depicting animals and is one of the most important of his series of portraits of horses. It is often thought that Marc considered animals to be more pure and more beautiful than humans and, therefore, his paintings represent a pantheistic understanding of the divine or of spirituality.

This work, which represents three vividly coloured blue horses looking down in front of a landscape of rolling red hills, is characterized by its bright primary colors. According to the

Encyclopedia Britannica, "the powerfully simplified and rounded outlines of the horses are echoed in the rhythms of the landscape background, uniting both animals and setting into a vigorous and harmonious organic whole." The curved lines Marc used to depict the subject are to emphasize "a sense of harmony, peace, and balance" in a spiritually-pure animal world; by viewing the work, human beings are allowed to join this harmony. Marc gave an emotional or psychological meaning or purpose to the colours he used in his work: blue was used for masculinity and spirituality, yellow represented feminine joy, and red encased the sound of violence and of base matter. His use of vivid colour is thought to have been an attempt to eschew the material world to evoke a spiritual or transcendental essence.

Blue Horse I (1911) is based on a sketchbook drawing which Marc made of a foal entitled *Young Horse in Mountain Landscape*. It was initially not understood and was derided or even spat upon.

Almost the entire height of the painting is taken up by the foal painted in blue, facing the viewer and tilting its head slightly to one side. The upper body is light blue with white spots, while the hooves and mane are painted in dark navy blue.

The landscape in which the foal is shown is dominated by strong contrasts of complementary colours, some of which are sharply demarcated from one another. The foreground is in vermilion and light green, and strong dark green brushstrokes indicate vegetation. The hilly landscape in the background changes from carmine to yellow, violet, and blue to orange at the top of the picture. The horse, to the Blue Rider group was a symbol, the vehicle of artistic breakthrough and the colour blue a spiritual challenge to the encroaching materialism of the modern state.



In 1912, Marc met Robert Delaunay, whose use of colour and the Futurist method was a major influence on Marc's work; fascinated by futurism and Cubism, Marc created art that increasingly was stark in nature, painting natural abstract forms which found spiritual value in colour. He painted *The Tiger* and *Red Deer* in 1912 and *The Tower of Blue Horses*, *The Foxes*, and *Fate of Animals* in 1913.



At two metres high **The Tower of Blue Horses** (1913) is regarded as one of Marc's most important and spiritual works.

Most of the picture is occupied by a frontal view of four primarily blue horses, arranged in a tier to the right of centre, facing the viewer but with their heads turned to the left. To the left of their rumps, which form the centre of the picture, is an abstract landscape; above it is an orange rainbow on a yellow background. The foremost horse has a crescent moon on its chest, and crosses on its body which suggest stars. Art historian Susanna Partsch suggests that the moon, rainbow, and suggestion of stars point to a reading of the painting as an attempt "to portray the unity of creature and cosmos", in which mankind is sublimated in the horses, who represent his power.

It is one of the most notable of those in which he attempts to "see and paint through [the animal's] eyes", or as Paul Klee put it, "he raises them to his own level". It deeply impressed many viewers; one wrote: "[The painting] holds us spellbound ... A group of four horses lights up before our eyes like a vision ... The mighty body of the foremost animal ... seems to emerge from the depths and stop immediately in front of the viewer". The tightly knit composition of the work with its geometric structure and the use of colour—with the transparency of stained glass, and with decreasing saturation as the eye travels upwards—sets up a powerful upwards movement.

In a 1921 lecture at Berlin University, the theologian Paul Tillich singled out this painting as an exemplar of the Expressionists' "destroying natural forms and colours in order to gain an insight into the inner truth of things."

It was acquired for the contemporary annex of the Berlin National Gallery, but removed from there as part of the "cleansing" of modern art works under the Nazis. In 1937 it was initially included in the notorious "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Munich. However, in response to a protest by veterans because Marc had died fighting for his country in the war, the painting was removed and was not included in the exhibition when it opened in Berlin. It was then transferred to Herman Göring's custody as part of a select group of valuable modernist paintings which also included two other works by Marc. Göring sold at least some of these at a considerable profit, but appears not to have sold *The Tower of Blue Horses*, which went missing at war's end, possibly destroyed when Göring had his country house blown up in 1945 at the approach of the Russians. Another source reported seeing it in a youth hostel with slits in it during the Berlin blockade of 1948/49. Other theories include it being in a vault in Swiss bank. If still in existence, extensive enquiries have not revealed its whereabouts.

***"Like everything genuine, its inner life guarantees its truth. All works of art created by truthful minds without regard for the work's conventional exterior remain genuine for all times."*—Marc**

One of Marc's best-known paintings, *Animal Destinies* or *Fate of the Animals*, is seen as a premonition of World War I. Marc had completed the work in 1913, when "the tension of impending cataclysm had pervaded society", as one art historian noted. On the rear of the canvas, Marc wrote, "Und Alles Sein ist flammend Leid" ("And all being is flaming agony"). Serving in World War I, Marc wrote to his wife about the painting, "[it] is like a premonition of this war—horrible and shattering. I can hardly conceive that I painted it."



There are animals scattered throughout the canvas in what is referred to as a post apocalyptic setting. The scene depicts a forest that is being destroyed by the flames that are evident all around. The painting consists of a blue deer in the middle of the canvas,—which some scholars see as a sacrifice, whose colour and upwards looking posture indicate—two boars on the left side, two horses above the boars, and four unidentified figures on the right. The four unidentified animals are believed to be either deer, foxes, or wolves. Most scholars believe that the animals are deer based on Marc's older works where he depicts them with the same colours and physical attributes. In contrast to his normal depiction of animals, in which animals are shown in a peaceful setting here he puts his beloved animals in a scene of destruction.

The last third of the painting was damaged in a warehouse fire in 1916 after Marc's death and was later restored by Paul Klee, who used old photographs for the restoration. He added a brownish tint to the paint creating an obvious variation from the rest of the painting. Many opinions on this decision have been offered, although none have been proven.



***"Art is nothing but the expression of our dream; the more we surrender to it the closer we get to the inner truth of things, our dream-life, the true life that scorns questions and does not see them."*—Marc**

Fighting Forms (1914) expresses conflict beyond interpretation and human understanding, with the stark contrast of red and black amorphous, swirling forms, subsuming and burying the distended contours of animals in a violent and apocalyptic disorientating and alienating storm. Painted at the very end of his life it possibly heralds a new phase in his art which was never to be realised.

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Marc was drafted into the Imperial German Army as a cavalryman. By February 1916 he had gravitated to military camouflage, as shown in a letter to his wife. His technique for hiding artillery from aerial observation was to paint canvas covers in broadly pointillist style. He took pleasure in creating a series of nine such tarpaulin covers in styles varying "from Manet to Kandinsky", suspecting that the latter could be the most effective against aircraft flying at 2,000 metres (6,600 ft) or higher. By 1916, he had been promoted to lieutenant and awarded the Iron Cross. After mobilization of the German Army, the government identified notable artists to be withdrawn from combat for their own safety. Marc was on the list but was struck in the head and killed instantly by a shell splinter during the Battle of Verdun in 1916, before orders for reassignment could reach him.



The Yellow Cow (1911)



*Young Boy with a Lamb;
The Good Shepherd* (1911)



Mountains (1911)



The Tiger (1912)



The Foxes (1913)



Deer in Forest 1 (1913)



Deer in the Forest II (1914)



Animals in a Landscape (1914)



Small Composition II
(1914)

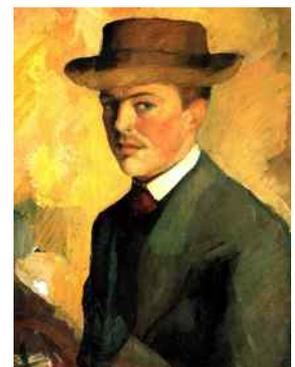


Playing Forms (1914)

“The senses are our bridge Between the incomprehensible and the comprehensible.”—Macke

August MACKE (1887-1914) met Franz Marc, in 1910, with whom he formed a close friendship, and through him Kandinsky in the same year. He was the only son of a building contractor and amateur artist. His mother came from a farming family. In 1900, when he was thirteen, the family moved to Bonn, and he became a friend of Walter Gerhardt and his sister, Elisabeth, whom he married a few years later.

The first artistic works to make an impression on the boy were his father's drawings, the Japanese prints collected by the father of a his friend, and the works of Arnold Böcklin which he saw on a visit to Basel in 1900. In 1904, following his father's death, Macke enrolled at the Dusseldorf Art Academy until 1906, also taking some evening classes and doing some work as a stage and costume designer. He visited northern Italy in 1905 and Netherlands, Belgium and Britain in 1906.



Self-Portrait (1909)



The Artist's Wife in Blue Hat
(1909)

Thereafter Macke lived most of his creative life in Bonn, with the exception of a few periods spent at Lake Thun in Switzerland and various trips to Paris, Italy, the Netherlands and Tunisia. In Paris, where he travelled for the first time in 1907, Macke saw the work of the Impressionists, and shortly after he went to Berlin and spent a few months in Lovis Corinth's (1858-1925) studio. His style was formed within the mode of French Impressionism and Post-impressionism and later went through a Fauve period.

In 1908 art historian Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965) published *Abstraction and Empathy, a contribution to the psychology of style*, a ground breaking and widely influential book, anticipating or paving the way for abstract art.

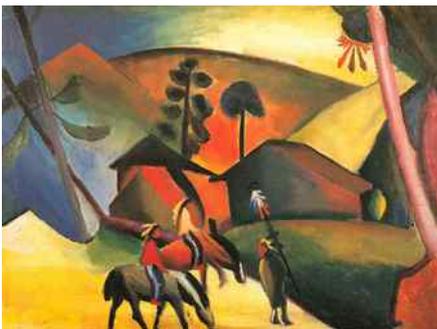
It posited two opposed poles of art: 'abstraction' as a non-figurative invention, the principal of form and order; and 'empathy' as the mimetic representation of external reality. He saw 'abstraction' as existing prior to 'abstract art', in the decorative, often geometrical non-representational arts common to all peoples.

He argued that abstract art was in no way inferior to realist art and was worthy of respect in its own right, and that what he called "the urge to abstraction" arises not because of cultural incompetence at mimesis but out of a "psychological need to represent objects in a more spiritual manner".

Worringer posited a direct relationship between the perception of art and the individual. His claim that "we sense ourselves in the forms of a work of art" led to a formula, "The aesthetic sense is an objectivised sense of the self." He also stated, "Just as the desire for empathy as the basis for aesthetic experience finds satisfaction in organic beauty, so the desire for abstraction finds its beauty in the life-renouncing inorganic, in the crystalline, in a word, in all abstract regularity and necessity."

However, he also saw all art as pervaded by both principles to a greater or lesser degree. Therefore 'abstraction' is a latent tendency of all art – a fundamental principle of all artistic behaviour.

Macke was a friend of the Worringer family. Wilhelm's sister, Emmy was a painter and his mother ran a high class restaurant in the zoological gardens in Cologne, which Mack liked to visit from Bonn with his sketchbooks.



At this time Macke was abstracting the landscape and figures, exploiting colour and form, to make a unified compositional arrangement. *Indians on Horseback* (1911) typifies the expressive nature of his work during the early Blue Rider period. He had not visited America so the subject may have been inspired by his reading of James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*.

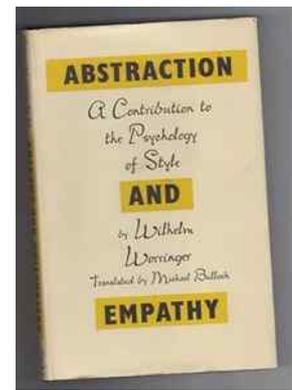
Three people and two horses are in a landscape of sharp, round mountains with a dark yellow sky, in front of which there are huts. The figures are "Indians" as Macke imagined them to be. The outlines are painted sharply, but

the colours run in the flat areas, as is typical of Macke's painting. Some things are reminiscent of Franz Marc's influence, such as the dark and shiny fantasy landscape, the formula-shaped surfaces and the trees leaning to the left. But Macke also used Cubist influences here for the first time, albeit in a "moderate way." Macke's conception of Cubism was softer and more pictorial than that of his colleagues; in contrast to Marc's images, it is more reminiscent of Fauvism. The motif of Macke's painting, the "noble savage", is also related to Cubism. It is the craving for paradise that has been in the consciousness of the European avant-garde since Paul Gauguin and his break with European artistic traditions and his confrontation with the exotic. Art historian Rosel Gollek quotes August Macke as saying that painting is "a joy in nature" for him.

Worringer's dissertation had a direct influence on Macke's pure abstractions, such as *Colour Compositions* and *Colour Forms* of 1912 and 1913. *Composition—Homage to Johanne Sebastian Bach* of 1912 contains analogies to abstraction in musical composition. It also suggests a strong influence of carpets with their rich abstract patterning and also of Byzantine decoration. The patterning of carpets, folk art and ceramic decoration, and Byzantine art was central to Worringer's thesis that crystalline, inorganic abstraction pre-dates and is concurrent with the development of naturalism (empathetic realism) in the development of western art.

Macke said:

"My entire joy in life comes almost entirely from pure colour. Last week I tried to combine colour on a board while keeping my mind free of objects like human figures and trees—as if I were embroidering a pattern."

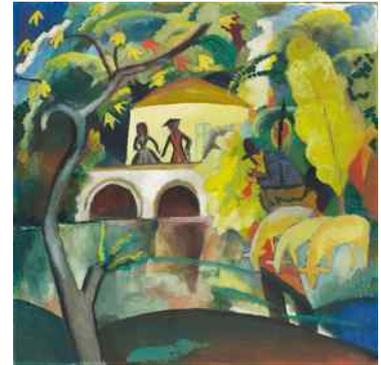




Coloured Forms 1 (1913) is pure, musical abstraction.

Macke said:

“The things that give music its mysterious beauty also fascinate us in painting. But it would require an inhuman degree of effort to organise colour within a system similar to that of musical notes. Colours, like music, have their counterpoint, their treble and bass clefs, their flats and sharps. An infinitely fine sense of colour can establish this order without the least knowledge of all this.”



Rokoko (1912) depicts a seated man, possibly a shepherd, playing a piped instrument in a lush, verdant landscape. At his feet are three sheep drinking from a lake or woodland pond. In the background two figures, possibly lovers, stand on a bridge in front of a domed building. Although the objects within the composition are 'abstracted' there is a clear suggestion of a narrative, perhaps a folk tale or legend, behind the picture.

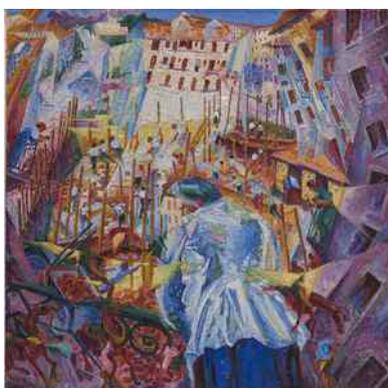


Macke's meeting with Robert Delaunay in Paris in 1912 was something of a revelation for him. Delaunay's chromatic Cubism, which Apollinaire had called Orphism, influenced Macke's art from that point onwards. His *Shop Windows* can be considered a personal interpretation of Delaunay's *Windows*, described by Macke as “sunlight flooding through the windowpanes”, combined with the simultaneity of images found in Italian Futurism.

The subject of Delaunay's ***Simultaneous Windows*** (1912) which Macke had seen in Paris at the end of October 1912, is a view through his studio window over the rooftops of Paris to the Eiffel Tower, fragmented into a crystalline format.

Large Bright Showcase (1912) was created after Macke had seen the canvases of the Italian Futurists at the Rhine Salon of Arts, in Cologne, which he had visited with Marc.

Macke's large-format canvas is reminiscent of Umberto Boccioni's painting ***The Street Enters the House*** (1912), which was also exhibited at the Salon of Rhine. Like Boccioni, Macke's composition



is centred on a female figure, but instead of Boccioni's houses and passers-by, repeated and seen flowing over each other, a syncopated vortex of many reflections in the show-case glass is formed around the woman. Items displayed in a sunlit display case combine with the reflections of horses harnessed to carriages and people passing by. Mirror glass, where different planes are combined, lines whimsically intersecting, embodies the bright, brilliant and hectic life of a metropolis. Paint strokes, mixing chaotically, help to visualize the noises of the street.



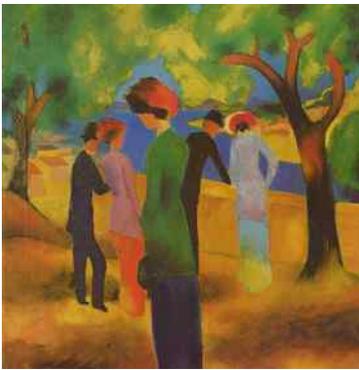
Like Boccioni, Macke uses the cubist technique, breaking into separate planes the wall of the house on the right, thus emphasizing the instability of the composition.

In September 1912, Macke and Marc and Marc's wife Maria travelled to Paris, where they visited numerous galleries as well as the studios of Henri Le Fauconnier and Robert Delaunay, who had both exhibited earlier in Munich.

On their way home, the Marcs stayed with the Mackes in Bonn. Franz and August worked together to paint the large mural *Paradise*. Marc's contribution included Adam, the tree with monkeys, the animals, and much of the landscape whereas Macke is thought to have painted Eve and the four figures in costume at the right of centre. More difficult to determine from their collaboration is who conceptualized the overall composition.

Mack's house is now open to the public as the *Museum August Macke Haus*, and the four metre high mural has been removed to a museum and replaced by a copy.

Macke and his wife and two sons left the noise and bustle of the Rhine-land in October 1913 and took up residence in Hilterfingen on Lake Thun in Switzerland for eight months. This proved to be a profitable time in terms of his output and new subjects.



Themes such as parks and shopping arcades proliferated. The theme of *Lady in a Green Jacket* (1913) is a walk in the park. The artist creates around the characters a world in which the people seem to match their stylized environment: the ladies appear in elegant tight dresses and fashionable hats while men wear dark suits and bowler hats. Macke himself described the protagonists of his paintings: "The generally accepted attribute of men is bowler hats, and I put bowlers on them. Women with slender necks and hips hold umbrellas in their hands to protect them from light." Individuality is excluded, the faces are shown schematically, and clothes are of a uniform cut, further enhancing the anonymity of the characters.

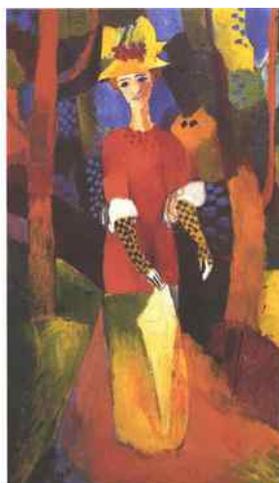
In the centre of the composition is a woman in a green jacket whose figure, presented half-turned, divides the canvas into two vertical parts. In the middle ground, under the canopy of tree crowns, two couples are walking. Two of them, a man and a woman, leaning on the parapet, are watching the river flow. The branches of the trees extend from each other almost at right angles are taken from Leonardo's *A Treatise on Painting*. The houses on both banks of the river are conceived in simplified forms, and the mountains in the distance are represented in the form of triangles.



His two versions of the Zoological Gardens, based on the many preparatory drawings showing elegant urban parks with animals, birds and figures arranged ornamentally like set pieces on a stage, and the sketches he made of the zoological gardens in Cologne, are said to be 'visions of paradise' with their sunlit views of the park and animals and figures painted in harmonies of shape and colour. The **Large Zoological Garden** (1913) is thinly painted in glowing colour with the transparency and freedom of touch of a watercolour. As a triptych it has resonances with Medieval altarpieces.

Macke, from the start, had reservations about the Blue Rider and Kandinsky. In a letter to Marc following the 1911 exhibition he said "Narcissism, fake heroism and blindness have a lot to answer for in the *Blau Reiter*....Kandinsky can air his personal opinions about that or any other revolution he cares to mention." Despite this he participated in the group's second exhibition in 1912 with sixteen drawings.

As a parting shot to the group he made a watercolour and pastel satirical pastiche of Kandinsky's Improvisations. **Persiflage on the Blau Reiter** (1912) shows Macke in the bottom right corner observing the 'nightmare', in which, along with portraits of Marc and Kandinsky, there are two oversize figures of the galleryist Herwarth Walden framing the picture.



Woman in Park (1914)

"Macke sees happiness as living in the circle of the family with his wife and two sons, and he defines art and living as 'instilling joy into nature.' This positive outlook, particularly in Macke's years in Bonn from 1911 to 1913, takes on a characteristic accent that feeds into his art. The images in Macke's compositions show variations and multifaceted representations of an earthly paradise. His works become visions of a world in harmony. And, as "songs on beauty" (Macke), they are simultaneously counter-concepts that stand in opposition to an age marked by technical innovation and industrialization. While the great International Expositions of the 19th century in Paris and London identified the South Seas and the Orient as distant places of yearning, Macke locates his earthly paradise in the here-and-now of the real world. All turbulent, destructive, and negative elements are banished. The garden appears as a place of leisure and comfort, as an earthly idyll. And just like his scenes depicting lovers and family, the people and animals in Macke's zoological garden pictures are also rendered as a harmonious and primal unity." (Ina Ewers-Schultz, Macke House Museum)

The Journey to Tunisia

Oriental motifs had long played a role in European art. Countless artists and writers in the nineteenth century had been fired by romantic conceptions of the exotic orient. However, their images of the orient had often been distant from the reality. Oriental motifs in Macke's work can be traced back to 1910 in his drawings, paintings textile designs and painted glass, reflecting western notions of the orient as a colourful fairy-tale world brimming over with fabulous riches.

In 1914, along with Paul Klee—who's idea it was, and who wished to find inspiration in a Tunisian landscape flooded by an African sun—and the Swiss artist Louis Moilliet, Macke fulfilled a long standing ambition to visit North Africa. It was to be a visit, as Klee put it, "in which each of us inspires the other." Although a short visit of about two weeks the bright light, narrow streets, and brilliant colours of the costumes and the sook had a marked effect on both Mack's and Klee's work.

For practical reasons they took only water-colour paints and a camera. In two weeks Macke produced 38 water-colours, over 100 drawings and many photographs.

The trip was funded by Bernhard Koehler (the uncle of his wife, Elizabeth) who had been his main financial support, funding his trips to Paris and collecting works of his and other members of the avant-garde. He



Photograph by Moilliet, with Macke on the donkey and Klee in the background.

promised to reward Koehler with “a painting of a nice fat lady from the Harem.”



The watercolour *View of an Alley* (1914) is full of radiant colour. This simply organised view of a narrow street with an archway, in the Arab quarter of Tunis, has a clarity of line and colour which dispenses with detailed narrative, but not entirely with a sense of perspective. We move with the yellow robed figure in the foreground into the sunlit space of a courtyard on the far side of the arch, where other figures congregate. The sense of perspective and fluidity of spacial recession is, however, disrupted by the dominating, flat surface forms.

He wrote to Elizabeth from the Europeanised suburb of Tunis, Saint Germain-sur-Mer: “We spend our time lying in the sun, eating asparagus etc. but you only have to turn round to find thousands of motifs. I've done 50 sketches today alone. Yesterday I did 25. I'm working like blazes, and enjoying it like never before.”

Courtyard of Villa in St. Germain (1914) was created with a few strokes of the pencil and washes of colour. Constructed from small components of flat areas and small dabs and lines, it has the appearance of a textile design. The two figures and other descriptive elements, windows, shutters, fences and leaves, are fully subjected to and integrated into the abstract system of form and colour. The influence of Cubist fragmentation and Delaunay's serene Orphist colour patches combine into a delicate image of leisurely, activity and tranquil ease. The seated figure in white is masterfully suggested by a mere hint of pale grey surrounding the outline, leaving the untouched paper, with a few additions for the black waistcoat and sleeve edging being sufficient to complete the illusion.

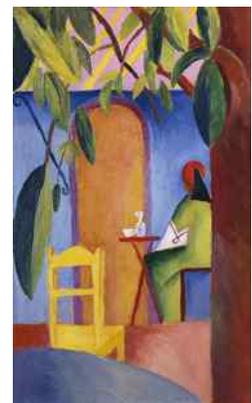


The pictorial arrangement of *Kairouan III* (1914) divided into zones with a pronounced vertical emphasis, ranged like a sequence of columns and spaces across the page, suggest that it was not painted on the spot, but was later constructed from a range of motives, architectural and figurative, found in different places. The domes and towers of the mosques are integrated into the vertical arrangement while the figurative elements, the figure at the bottom and right, and the camel, seem to have wandered in like visitors, and in the case of the camel about to wander out again. The other objects are arranged in a rhythmical sequence and fully absorbed into the abstract pictorial order. Macke succeeds

admirably in this retrospective work to beautifully summon up the radiant Tunisian light. The division into square and rectangular zones, without becoming entirely abstract, reflects the influence of Klee's structural technique.

In a letter to Elisabeth he wrote of his impressions: “Here we are sitting in the middle of the African countryside, drawing, writing – Klee is doing a watercolour. This morning I walked around the town and did some work. African countryside is even more beautiful than Provence. I would never have thought it. There is a Bedouin camp with black tents situated not 200 paces from where I am sitting; we are surrounded by herds of donkeys, camels etc....Yesterday we walked through various Arab seraglios. The women were sitting or standing by their doors in the sun. A wonderful sight. Everything was so gaily coloured and clear – like church windows.”

Turkish Cafe II (1914) is an oil painting made on his return; it was given to Koehler as a thank you for funding the trip. In both versions Macke has eliminated the detailed dynamism and spontaneous facture of the watercolour sketches. An Arab figure wearing a fez and kaftan is seated at a table in a café. The figure and other objects are rigorously subject to the abstraction of the composition. Large blocks of colour dominate in both paintings, representing the house,



the door and the figure. All sense of spacial relationships is dissolved in favour of flat surface relationships.



On the 22nd. April 1914 he and Moilliet returned from Tunis via Palermo and Rome, arriving in Bonn early June, when he probably painted *Garden on Lake Thun* (1913? or 14). In the balance of forms—mere suggestions of trees, mountains, water and a building—and the harmonious colour patches evocative of a view across the lake, the picture demonstrates a natural harmony between 'abstraction and 'empathy.'

“Even in the games of children, even in the hat of a cocotte, in our joy at a sunny day, invisible ideas gently assume material form.”—Macke

His late work on his return to Bonn betray his experience in Tunisia. In a series of paintings of parks, such as *Couple at the Garden Table*, or *Girls under Trees*, the figures, trees, benches and footpaths seem dissolved in radiant light, as the soft contours seem about to evaporate in the enveloping atmosphere. As the light of Tunis suffuses and dematerialises the dull Rhenish sky in passages of flowing, overlapping colour the girls and their surroundings become densely interwoven in the fabric of his imagination, in this “earthly paradise” this “nature imbued with joy” as Macke put it. It would maybe be wrong to regard these paintings as complete statements of an idea; rather they are in a state of eternal 'becoming', in the sense of the Eastern religious view.



Some critics have described these works as a return to his 'impressionist' origins. However, this is an erroneous view as they can be termed 'impressionistic' only in the softness of the forms and delicacy of small brush-marks; rather they can be more accurately described as wholly expressionist, as a synthesis of all his experiences and technical explorations, as a turning along his artistic journey towards a new vision of harmony between man and the environment; a constructive determinant in the direction of absorption into a paradisaical landscape of the mind.

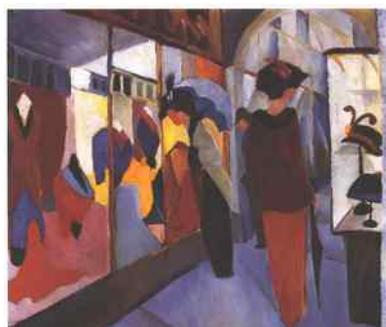


Macke's vision contain moods of serenity and peace, a testimony to his view of the world as one of harmony, untroubled by anxiety. Only in his last unfinished work, later titled *Leave Taking*, does he appear to touch on the war that was to ravage Europe. Groups of brown and black-clad figures, reduced to rhythmically grouped silhouettes, seem to bow their heads as if in mourning; perhaps a premonition of his own death.

On the 8th of August 1914 he was called up for active service. On the 20th of September he was awarded the 'Iron Cross' as an officer cadet. On the 26th of September he was killed in action south of the village of Perthes-les-Hurles, Champagne. He was 27 years old.



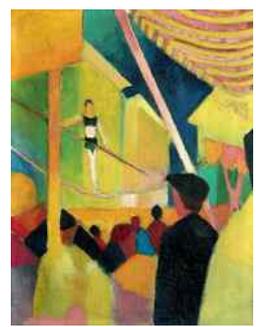
Couple in the Woods (1912)



Fashion Shop (1913)



People by a Blue Lake (1913)



Tightrope Walker (1913)



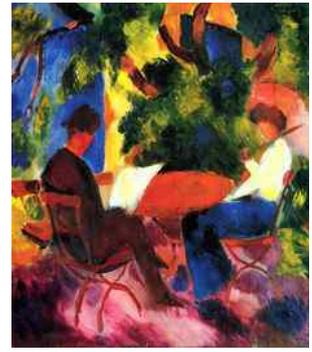
Woman With a Parasol in Front of a Hat Shop (1914)



Turkish Jewel Trader (1914)



Promenade with Half-Length Girl in White (1914)

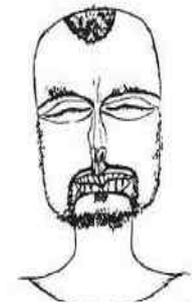


Couple at the Garden Table (1914)

“Art does not reflect what is seen, rather it makes the hidden visible.”—Klee

Paul KLEE (1879-1940) was a Swiss-born German artist. The son of a German music teacher, Hans Wilhelm Klee, and Swiss singer Ida Marie Klee, his highly individual style was influenced by movements in art that included expressionism, cubism and surrealism. Klee was a natural draughtsman who experimented with and eventually deeply explored colour theory writing about it extensively; his lectures *Writings on Form and Design Theory* are held to be as important for modern art as Leonardo da Vinci's *A Treatise on Painting* was for the Renaissance. His works reflect his dry humour and his sometimes childlike perspective, his personal moods and beliefs, and his musicality.

He was so talented on violin that, aged 11, he received an invitation to play as an extraordinary member of the Bern Music Association. His other hobbies, drawing and writing poems, were not fostered in the same way as was his music. Partly out of rebellion and partly because modern music lacked meaning for him his parents reluctantly allowed him to study art. As a musician, he played and felt emotionally bound to traditional works of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but as an artist he craved the freedom to explore radical ideas and styles. At sixteen, Klee's landscape drawings already showed considerable skill. In 1898 Klee began studying art at the Academy of fine arts in Munich under Franz von Stuck. Although he excelled at drawing in his early studies he seemed to lack any natural colour sense. He later recalled, "During the third winter I even realized that I probably would never learn to paint."



Lost in Thought (Self-Portrait) (1919)

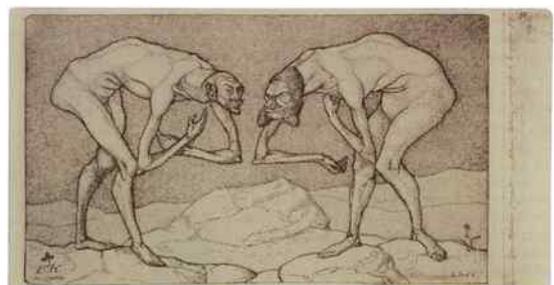


In the years 1903–05 he completed a cycle of eleven zinc-plate etchings called *Inventions*, his first exhibited works, in which he illustrated several grotesque characters. He commented, "though I'm fairly satisfied with my etchings I can't go on like this. I'm not a specialist." Klee was still dividing his time with music, playing the violin in an orchestra and writing concert and theatre reviews.

The satirical etchings, for example ***Third Invention-Young Woman on the Tree*** from 1903 and ***Aged Phoenix*** (1905) were classified by Klee as "surrealistic outposts".

The picture was influenced by the grotesque lyric poetries of Alfred Jarry, Max Jacob and Christian Morgenstern. It features a cultural pessimism, which can be found at the turn of the 20th century in works by Symbolist poets.

The ***Sixth Invention—Two Men, Supposing the Other to be in a Higher Position*** (1903) depicts two naked men, presumably emperor Wilhelm II and Franz Joseph I of Austria recognizable by their hairstyle and beards. As their clothes and insignia were bereft, "both of them have no clue if their conventional salute [...] is in order or not. As they assume that their counterpart could have been higher rated", they bow and scrape.



In autumn 1911 Klee made the acquaintance of August Macke and Wassily Kandinsky and in winter he joined the editorial team of the almanac *Der Blaue Reiter*, founded by Franz Marc and Kandinsky.



In 1912 he travelled to Paris where he encountered the ferment of Cubism and the use of bold colour by Robert Delaunay and Maurice de Vlaminck. From these examples, using blocks of colour with limited overlap, he began working out his own colour experiments in pale watercolours and did some primitive landscapes, including *In the Quarry* (1913) and *Houses near the Gravel Pit* (1913).

Klee acknowledged that "a long struggle lies in store for me in this field of colour" in order to reach his "distant noble aim." Soon, he discovered "the style which connects drawing and the realm of colour."

Klee's artistic breakthrough came in 1914 when he briefly visited Tunisia with August Macke and Louis Moilliet where he was impressed by the quality of the light. He wrote, "Colour has taken possession of me; no longer do I have to chase after it, I know that it has hold of me forever... Colour and I are one. I am a painter." With that realization, faithfulness to nature faded in importance. Instead, Klee began to delve into the "cool romanticism of abstraction".

In the watercolour, *Hammamet with its Mosque* (1914), Klee has divided the view into roughly squared off zones. The tower and dome of the mosque, and the foreground buildings dissolve in the intense north African light into a rich pattern of colour areas and small marks. This was to become a signature style in many of his works from this point.



After returning home, Klee painted his first pure abstract, *In the Style of Kairouan* (1914), composed of coloured rectangles and a few circles. The coloured rectangle became his basic building block, some scholars associating it with a musical note, which Klee combined with other coloured blocks to create a colour harmony analogous to a musical composition: his selection of a particular colour palette emulating a musical key. Sometimes he uses complementary pairs of colours, and other times "dissonant" colours, again reflecting his connection with musicality.

"Colour is the place where our brain and the universe meet"—Klee

In gaining a second artistic vocabulary, Klee added colour to his abilities in draftsmanship, and in many works combined them successfully, as he did in the series he called "operatic paintings". One of the most literal examples of this new synthesis is *The Bavarian Don Giovanni* (1919).

In March 1916 Klee was conscripted as reservist into the army, spending the war behind the front working on aircraft maintenance. He was able to continue to draw and paint during the entire war and managed to exhibit in several shows. By 1917, Klee's work was selling well and art critics



acclaimed him as the best of the new German artists. *Ab ovo* (1917) is particularly noteworthy for its sophisticated technique. It employs watercolour on gauze and paper with a chalk ground, which produces a rich texture of triangular, circular, and crescent patterns. Demonstrating his range of exploration, mixing colour and line, his *The Warning of the Ships* (1918) is a colour-ed drawing filled with symbolic images on a field of suppressed colour.



The war effectively brought the *Blaue Reiter* to an end. Klee (from 1921 to 1931) and Kandinsky (1922 to 1933) both later taught at the Bauhaus school of art, design and architecture in Germany.



Winged Man
(1905)



View of a Square (1912)



Houses Near the Gravel Pit
(1913)



Homage to Picasso
(1914)



Red and White Domes
(1914)



**In the Houses of
St. Germain** (1914)



**Foehn in Marc's
Garden** (1915)



Flower Myth
(1918)

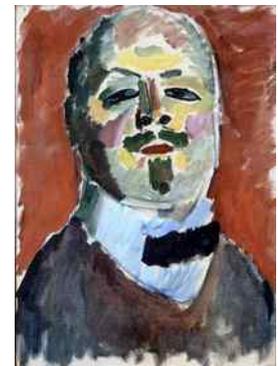


**The Warning of
the Ships** (1918)

"I knew that I must paint not what I saw, but only what was in me, in my soul."—Jawlensky

Alexej von JAWLENSKY (1864-1941) was a Russian expressionist painter active in Germany. After a few years of military training, he became interested in painting, after visiting the Moscow World Exposition c.1880. Due to his social connections he arranged his transfer to St. Petersburg and studied at the art academy from 1889 to 1896. He gained admittance to the circle of the renowned Russian realist painter Ilya Repin, where he met Marianne von Werefkin, a wealthy artist and former student of Repin. She agreed to become his mentor, putting her own work on hold to promote his work and provide him with a comfortable lifestyle.

Following their move to Munich in 1894 he studied at the private art school of Russian emigré Anton Ažbe, later meeting Kandinsky in Munich. He was a key member in the formation of the New Munich Artist's Association.



Self-Portrait (1905)



Violet Turban (1911)

His work in this period was lush and richly coloured, but later moved towards abstraction and a simplified, formulaic style. Between 1908 and 1910 Jawlensky and Werefkin spent summers in the Bavarian Alps with Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter. Here, through painting landscapes of their mountainous surroundings, they experimented with one another's techniques and discussed the theoretical bases of their art. Following a trip to the Baltic coast, and renewed contact with Henri Matisse in 1911 and Emile Nolde in 1912, Jawlensky turned increasingly to the expressive use of colour and form in his portraits.

In 1913, Werefkin and Jawlensky participated in the exhibition of *Der Blaue Reiter* in Herwarth Walden's Berlin gallery *Der Sturm* (The Storm).



Werefkin, The Skaters (1911)

In 1914 Jawlensky and Werefkin were expelled from Germany, which they had to leave within twenty four hours, handing over the keys to their apartment to Klee and his wife, Lily, and they moved to Switzerland along with her maids Helene (now housekeeper) and

her sister Maria, and Helene's son Andreas, born in 1902 to Jawlensky. Werefkin knew that Jawlensky was a womanizer: "Love is a dangerous thing, especially in the hands of Jawlensky." However she refused to marry, not least because of the generous pension from the Tsar, which she would have lost if she were a married woman. But Werefkin was determined to support Jawlensky as an artist in every way. She lost her pension as a result of the Russian October Revolution in 1917.



Saviour's Face-Martyr (1919)

Of her time in Russia during Jawlensky's training she wrote: "Three years passed in tireless nurturing of his mind and heart. Everything, everything he received from me, I pretended to take - everything I put into him I pretended to receive as a gift... so that he should not be jealous as an artist, I hid my art from him"

In 1916 he met Emmy Scheyer (1889-1945) a German-American painter, art dealer, collector and teacher. She also devoted much of her time to promoting his work in the United States to the detriment of her own.

After a hiatus in experimentation with the human form, Jawlensky produced perhaps his best-known series, the *Mystical Heads* (1917–19), and the *Saviour's Faces* (1918–20), which are reminiscent of the traditional Russian Orthodox icons of his childhood.

In 1921 Jawlensky separated from Werefkin and moved to Wiesbaden, where in 1922 he married Helene.



Still Life with Flowers (1908)



Young Girl in a Flowered Hat (1910)



Head of a Youth (1911)



Self-Portrait (1912)



Head in Blue (1912)



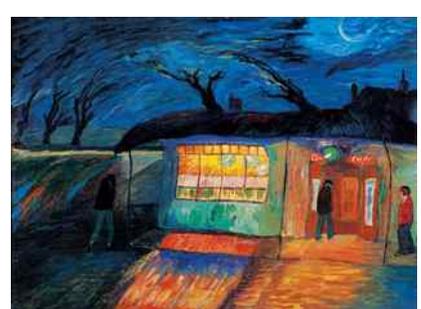
Astonishment (1919)



Abstract Head, Water and Light (1928)



Werefkin, Self-Portrait I (1910)



Werefkin, Storm Winds (1915–17)

"There is no foreground or background, only a continuity of interlacing relationships."–Feininger

Lyonel FEININGER (1871-1956) was born in New York City of German heritage, and a leading exponent of expressionism. His father was the German-American violinist and composer Karl Feininger and his mother was the American singer Elizabeth Feininger. In 1887 he travelled to Europe and studied art in Hamburg, Berlin and Paris. He started his very successful career as a cartoonist and comic strip artist in 1894

At the age of 36, he began to work as a fine artist. His work, characterized above all by prismatically broken, overlapping forms in translucent colours, with many references to architecture and the sea, Furthermore he produced a large body of photographic works and created several piano compositions and fugues for organ.

In 1901 he married the concert pianist Clara Fürst, daughter of the painter Gustav Fürst. In 1905, he separated from his wife after meeting Julia Berg. He married Berg in 1908 and the couple had three sons.



Self-Portrait with Clay Pipe (1910)

He was represented with drawings at the exhibitions of the annual Berlin Secession in the 1901 through to 1903.

In February 1906, when a quarter of Chicago's population was of German descent, he was recruited to illustrate two comic strips for the *Chicago Tribune*. The strips were noted for their fey humour and graphic experimentation. He also worked as a commercial caricaturist for 20 years for various newspapers and magazines in the United States, Germany, and France. Later, Art Spiegelman wrote in *The New York Times Book Review* that Feininger's comics have "achieved a breathtaking formal grace unsurpassed in the history of the medium."

Feininger started working as a fine artist at the age of 36. He was a member of the Berlin Secession in 1909, and he was associated with *Die Brücke*, *Der Blau Reiter*, *Novembergruppe* and *Gruppe 1919*.



The White Man (1907, Museo Thyssen Bornemisza) was painted in Paris. It is one of Feininger's earliest paintings in which he took the human figure as a theme. An earlier published drawing, entitled "*Les regrets de M. Hearst*," is identical in detail. However, the title was probably invented by the editor of *Le Témoign*, in which it appeared and was unlikely to be intended as a portrait of the newspaper baron, William Randolph Hearst, but is more likely to be a satirical Self-Portrait. Scuttling between the legs of the towering figure in white, as if bent on distracting him or tripping him up, is a tiny figure dressed in black, perhaps an alter ego, signifying the dark side of the artist's nature.

The background against which the figures are set depicts a specific Parisian location: a view along the rue Clovis, with the distinctive outline of the Tour Ste. Geneviève seen in the middle distance. It is based on one of Feininger's rapidly executed "nature notes," in which the artist has faithfully captured the same architectural details.

Gelmeroda is a small village on the outskirts of Weimar that Lyonel Feininger first visited in the summer of 1906. Soon thereafter, the town and its Gothic church began to appear as a backdrop in his figurative oils and drawings. In 1913, he painted the first of what would be a series of thirteen monumental oils focusing exclusively on the church and its spire. Executed over the course of more than two decades, the Gelmeroda series charts Feininger's changing treatment of light and form. *Gelmeroda, VIII*, [see illustration below] painted during Feininger's tenure as a professor at the Bauhaus in Weimar, demonstrates the artist's engagement with a vocabulary of layered, prismatic forms during this period. Set into the surrounding sky like a faceted jewel, the church seems to embody Feininger's assertion that he was interested in painting the space around objects, not objects themselves. The solemn churchgoers at the lower edge—figures who establish the monumental scale of the architecture—seem similarly incorporeal, reduced to a group of translucent, earthbound triangles. The effect, however, is not one of traditional hierarchy, but of unity: in Feininger's painting, heaven and earth are facets of a single, ethereal reality. (Label—Whitney Museum of American Art)



Gelmeroda III (1913)



From 1909 until 1918, Feininger spent summer vacations at Benz, on the Baltic Sea island of Usedom, to recover and to get new inspiration. Typical of works from this period were marine settings from the shores of the island. Painted during the development of his mature style, influenced by Cubism, **Ships** (1917, Museo Thyssen Bornemisza) fragments the sky and sea into sharp triangles in prismatic echoes of the sails of the boats. The picture is radiated by shafts of intense light bouncing off the water, such as may be experienced when looking out to sea.

Along with Kandinsky and Klee, Feininger later taught at the Dessau Bauhaus, designing the cover for the Bauhaus 1919 manifesto.

After the Nazis came to power in 1933, the situation became unbearable for Feininger and his wife when he was declared a degenerate artist. They moved with their three children to America after his work was exhibited in the "degenerate art" exhibition in 1936. He taught at Mills College, Oakland, California, before returning to New York. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1955. Barbara Haskell, curator of the Whitney exhibition, wrote that for his entire life, Feininger credited Bach with having been his "master in painting."



Carnival in Arcueil (1911)



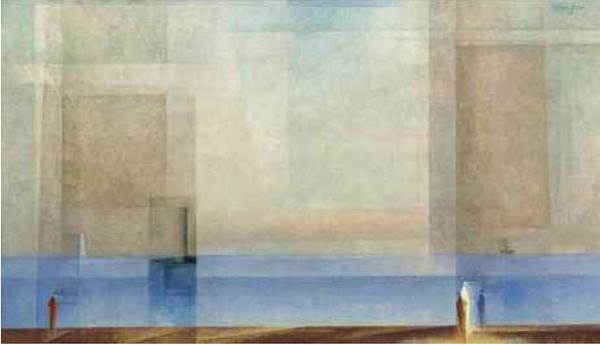
Benz VI (1914)



Gelmeroda VIII (1921)



Gelmeroda XIII (1936)



Calm at Sea II (1927)



Sailboats (1929)

“I never was very capable of expressing my feelings or emotions in words. I don’t know whether this is the cause why I did it in music and also why I did it in painting. Or vice versa: That I had this way as an outlet. I could renounce expressing something in words.”—Schoenberg

Arnold SCHOENBERG (1874-1951) was an Austrian and American composer, music theorist, teacher and writer. Among the first modernist composers to write music of dense motivic relations saturating the musical texture, he propounded concepts like “developing variation” the “emancipation of dissonance” and the “unity of musical space.”

Schoenberg was a painter of considerable ability, whose works were considered good enough to exhibit alongside those of Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky, as fellow members of *Der Blaue Reiter*. From about 1908 to 1910, he would execute approximately two-thirds of a total oeuvre comprising about sixty-five oils

Kandinsky perceived a kinaesthetic relationship between colour and sound. In what he described as sound tones, each colour had a pitch and volume. Yellow, whose characteristic was warmth and excitement, was connected to loud, sharp sounds. It could signify joy, annoyance, or enervation. Blue, the most spiritually resonant colour - the darker the blue, the deeper the feeling of calm, was the colour of peace and spirituality. The richer, and deeper blues had a more sustained sound tone. He suggested that hues of varying saturation corresponded to the timbres of specific instruments, where red was the strong, forceful playing of a trumpet fanfare or a high, clear violin, and green was a gentle violin played at middle position.



Self-Portrait (1910)



Mizzi Pappenheim (1909)



Alban Berg (1910)



Helene Berg, nee-Nahowski (c.1910)



Hugo Botstiber (c.1910)



Memory of Oskar K0koschka (1910)



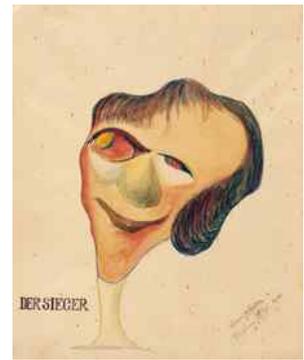
Satire, Karl Kraus (1910)



Gustav Mahler (1910)



The Red Gaze (1910)



The Winner (1919)

The Blue Four

Die Blaue Vier (The Blue Four) group was formed in 1923; consisting of Kandinsky, Klee, Feininger and Jawlensky. Together they exhibited and lectured in the United States from 1924.

Emilie (Galca) Scheyer's commitment to the Blue Four began in 1915, when she first saw the work of Russian artist Jawlensky in Lausanne, Switzerland. She organized his participation in a group show in Wiesbaden in 1921. That same year, on a trip to the Bauhaus in Weimar, Germany, Jawlensky introduced her to Feininger, Kandinsky and Klee, who were instructors at the avant-garde art school.

From 1924 Scheyer represented the Blue Four in the United States, organizing the first American exhibition of their work at the Charles Daniel Gallery, New York, in 1925. The next year she travelled to the west coast and began arranging exhibits of work by the Blue Four and giving lectures on their work in multiple major cities.

A Blue Four show she co-sponsored in Los Angeles with the film director Joseph von Sternberg attracted the modernist collectors Walter and Louise Arensberg, whose collection she persuaded him to augment with the works of Paul Klee. To promote the group Scheyer even lent works by the Blue Four as props in movies.

Scheyer's continuous efforts to promote the Blue Four widened the influence of European modernism in the United States; introducing John Cage and Diego Rivera to the work of these artists.



The *Deutsche Post* issued a stamp with Marc's *Blue Horse I* painting on 9th February 2012, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of *Der Blaue Reiter*.