**Title:** Hearing color and Seeing Music

**Date:** September 22, and September 29, 2017

**Description:** Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) is considered the first entirely abstract artist using only color and geometric shapes to express his ideas. He used to say that he could hear color and see music. Each painting he created sought to share his vision with the world. Students will create 4 drawings while listening to music. They will allow their line and color choices to be influenced by sound.

**Big Idea, key concept:** Original ideas create interesting works of art

**Essential questions:** Can you see music? Do colors speak to you?

**Essential art questions:** How do you express music or sound through line and color?

**Grade Level:** Elementary

**Timeline:** Two 1 hour class periods

**State Standards:**

26.A.1e State Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced. A: Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts. 1e: Identify media and tools and how to use them in a safe and responsible manner when painting, drawing and constructing.

27.B.1 State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present. B: Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life. 1: Know how images, sounds and movement convey stories about people, places and times.

**Motivation/Activities:**

**Day 1:** Show students Kandinsky’s Sketch for “Composition II”. What do you see? The artist’s name was Wassily Kandinsky. He put it in a show with other artists such as Picasso, but when art critiques and other people saw it they were outraged! They sad that it must be the work of a madman. Why do you think they would say this? Kandinsky (1866-1944) was the first abstract painter. He was influenced by impressionists (like Van Gogh and Monet) but he was simplifying painting even further by reducing it to basic color and shapes. His work becomes more simplistic and geometric later in his life. Originally he trained to be a lawyer, but at the age of 30 while listening to Wagner’s “Lohengrin” at the theater he became inspired by the music. He said, “Violins, deep basses and especially the wind instruments represented fro me the full force of the twilight hour; in my mind I saw all my colors, they were all there, in my mind’s eye. Wild, almost crazy lines, were being painted in front of me.” He claimed that he could see music and hear color. His original ideas paved the way for a whole new way of making art.

We are going to listen to music to inspire our own works of art. First we'll close our eyes
and listen. Try to imagine what the music would look like if it were in front of you. Then when I say, you’ll pick up a pencil and draw some lines and shapes that you feel represent the music you are listening to. We'll trace over the pencil with permanent marker and then listen to the song a second time to add color. We’ll do one drawing today and two next week.

Day 2: Review. Who is our artist? What kind of work did he make? How old was he when he started making work? What inspired his art? Today we are going to listen to two more songs. We'll take a moment to listen and be inspired. I’ll tell you when to pick up your pencil. We’ll take a break to trace our lines with permanent marker and then listen to the song a second time to add color.

Materials:
Kandinsky’s paintings:
Sketch for “Composition II”
Composition 8
Circles in a Circle
Cardstock paper 9” x 12” (3 sheets per student)
pencils
permanent marker
oil pastels
crayons
computer
speakers
music:
Andrew Bird: Hot Math, Sigh Master
Octopus Project: Truck, Snow Tip Cap Mountain