

KANDINSKY

PAINTING

ON

GLASS



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VASILY KANDINSKY
PAINING ON GLASS

(HINTERGLASMALEREI)

ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, NEW YORK

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A hundred years ago, on December 4, 1866, Vasily Kandinsky was born in Moscow. The Guggenheim Museum as one of the principal depositories of Kandinsky's work therefore wishes to join in the world-wide tributes offered to this great pioneer of modern painting. Since the retrospective held here as recently as 1963 precludes a comprehensive treatment of Kandinsky's oeuvre, the illumination of a particular aspect has been decided upon as a suitable alternative.

The German term "Hinterglasmalerei" describes the subject better than any attempted English translation could. Dissolved into its components *Hinterglasmalerei* means *painting applied to the back surface of a glass pane*. It means further that the painted surface sealed opaquely from behind, projects itself forward through the transparent glass which is often held within an elaborate frame upon which the artist may lavish his decorative care. There is no need here to describe *Hinterglasmalerei* further, since Dr. Hans Konrad Röthel does so in this catalogue—the first devoted to this precious and delightful aspect of Kandinsky's art.

The Museum's gratitude toward Dr. Röthel however should be recorded here. As Director of the Städtische Galerie in Munich he has custody of the largest extant number of Kandinsky's *Hinterglasmalereien*, and his generous loan, therefore, made possible the first presentation of this phase in Kandinsky's work in the United States. Together with his Assistant, Dr. Erika Hanfstaengl, Dr. Röthel also provided the valuable documentation published in the following pages for the first time.

The exhibition, however, would be restricted to contributions from a single source had not Mme. Nina Kandinsky, the artist's widow, graciously lent the four works in this medium that remain in her hands. These were added to other valuable loans from Herr Dr. Beck, Frau Annemarie Rose, an anonymous collector as well as The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's own single glass work.

Such an assemblage leaves only one sizeable group executed in the glass medium beyond our reach. It is the series of works on glass now in various museums in the Soviet Union which Kandinsky completed between his return to Russia in 1914 and his departure in 1921. While this phase of Kandinsky's *Hinterglasmalerei* will be missed in this show, the catalogue profited from the information given by Mr. B. Bolodarski of the Tretjakoff Gallery, Moscow and from Professor Kenneth C. Lindsay's photographic and descriptive documentation which, made available to the Guggenheim Museum through Professor Lindsay's generosity, again constitutes material not previously published and, therefore, of extraordinary importance to Kandinsky scholarship.

The exhibition it seemed, would have missed the rare opportunity to relate Kandinsky's *Hinterglasmalerei* with some of its sources, had it not included examples of the Bavarian glass painter's craft which together with the memory of Russian icons furnished points of departure for Kandinsky's glass art. Together with selected works on paper—watercolors, drawings and prints and two important oils by the master—which may be related to the glass work iconographically—the Bavarian craft furnishes us with the background material upon which a full understanding of the particular meaning of *Hinterglasmalerei* depends. The loan of this accessory material, too, is due to the generosity of the Städtische Galerie in Munich and gives the Guggenheim Museum another opportunity for grateful acknowledgement.

Finally thanks are due to Dr. Louise Averill Svendsen who, assisted by Rose-Carol Washton, is responsible for the preparation of this catalogue, to Orrin H. Riley who designed the special installation in the Museum's High Gallery and to Dr. Alfred Werner who translated Dr. Röthel's introduction from the original German into English.

Thomas M. Messer, Director

INTRODUCTION

HANS KONRAD RÖTHEL

. . . the more possibilities for interpretation through fantasy the better.

Kandinsky

Costly because they are brittle, precious because of their artistic qualities, these glass paintings deserve special treatment inasmuch as in no other medium did Kandinsky create so many works of a religious nature nor depict such important works with eschatological subjects. And there is humour too. A number of them seem to have been produced almost playfully in the evening-hours¹ while Kandinsky and his friends were working on the almanac *Der Blaue Reiter*.² They might, therefore, be considered as bagatelles. Still, these glass paintings occupy a special place in the oeuvre of the master, and their importance is of a different kind than one would think if one were judging them solely by their fragile material or their casual origin. One of the large color woodcuts from *Klänge*³ is a modified version of a *Hinterglasbild*; the oil painting *Little Pleasures*—a title one would like to apply to the entire group of glass painting—has its origin in a *Hinterglasbild*; *Composition 6* (as stated by Kandinsky himself in the notes which follow his autobiographical *Rückblicke*⁴ was also based on a *Hinterglasbild*. Kandinsky must have thought highly of his works in this genre, for he allowed three of them to be shown at the first Blue Rider exhibition held at Thannhauser's Gallery in Munich in 1911. (They are not listed in the catalogue). Of course, these pictures were, in a sense, trifles. But to understand the significance of such "playthings", one must consult a letter which Kandinsky addressed to Gabriele Münter, on August 10, 1904. Apparently, Münter had been somewhat critical of his early woodcuts. Kandinsky wrote⁵:

"You need not ask for the purpose of this or that work of mine. All of my works have only one purpose, or rather, reason—I had to make them, because there was no other way I could free myself of certain thoughts (or, perhaps, dreams). Nor am I thinking of any practical use. I have just got to make the thing. Later, you will understand this better. You say: A plaything! Indeed—everything which the artist produces is only a plaything. He tortures himself, he is searching to find an expression for his feelings and thoughts, he talks with color, form, drawing, sound, word, and so

forth. Why? This is a big question. We shall discuss this later. Viewed from the outside, it is only playfulness. To the artist the question, 'For what purpose?' has little meaning. All he knows is: 'Why'. That is how works of art originate, and that is also how things originate which are not yet works of art, but only stations on the way to works of art, yet already little lights, which have a sound within them. The first things, which are works of art, and also the second, which are not (the first, after all, are only too rare) *must* be made, because without making them, the artist would have no peace. After all, you have observed at Kallmünz how I paint. In this manner I make everything else which I *must* make: it is ready within me, and it *must* find expression. When I 'play' in this manner, every nerve within me is vibrating, in my whole body there is the sound of music, and God is in my heart . . ."

As a rule, it is impossible to state exactly the sources of Kandinsky's artistic inspiration. However, in this particular instance, one can clearly say that his glass paintings were modeled on the Hinterglasmalerei of rural Bavaria. Gabriele Münter believed—according to her recollection⁶—that she had been the first in her circle to discover these examples of popular art. She collected and copied them. Eventually this technique gave her so much pleasure that she made her own paintings on glass, and, finally, also urged Kandinsky to produce something in this medium. The old Hinterglasbilder, naive in motifs and simple in technique, were bound to appeal to Münter's nature and to her style, which consolidated itself around 1908.⁷ It was then—hardly earlier—that she came across these objects, for, after an absence of four years, the two had just returned to Munich and bought a house at Murnau in Southern Bavaria. When they discovered Murnau, some families in the village were then still continuing to paint Hinterglasbilder in the old tradition. (See the examples in the current exhibition).

"My inclination toward the 'hidden', the concealed, saved me from the harmful side of folk art, which I saw for the first time in its true setting and original form on my trip to the district of Vologda . . . I shall never forget the large wooden houses covered with carvings. In these wonderful houses I experienced something that has never repeated itself since. They taught me *to move in the picture*, to live in the picture. I still remember how I entered the room for the first time and stopped short on the threshold before the unexpected sight. The table, the benches, the great oven, important in Russian peasant houses, the wardrobes and every object were painted with bright-colored, large-figured decorations. On the walls folk paintings: a hero in symbolic representation, a battle, a painted folk song. The 'red' corner ('red' is in old Russian equivalent for 'beautiful') thickly and completely covered with painted and printed pictures of saints; in front of this, a small, red-burning, hanging lamp which glowed and flourished like a knowing, gently-speaking, modest star, proudly living in and for itself. When I finally entered the room, I felt myself surrounded on all sides by Painting, into which I had thus penetrated. The same feeling slumbered within me, unconsciously up to then, when I was in churches in Moscow and especially in the great cathedral of the Kremlin. On my next visit to this church after my return from the trip, this feeling revived in me perfectly clearly. Later I often had the same experience in Bavarian and Tyrolean chapels. Naturally the impression was differently colored each time since different elements had formed the impression."⁸

However, what actually interested Kandinsky and his friends in these popular artists was neither the folkloristic, nor the religious element, nor even the primitive *per se*. It was *das Künstlerische* that aroused their enthusiasm; it was the genuineness of their approach to art and the sincerity of their endeavours that made Kandinsky write:



Fig. 1. *Self-Portrait of Henri Rousseau*,
by Franz Marc. Glass painting, 1911.
Collection Städtische Galerie
im Lenbachhaus, Munich.



Fig. 2. *St. Martin*.
Bavarian glass painting. $7\frac{7}{8} \times 5''$.
Collection Gabriele Münter- und
Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, Munich.

“This may account in part for our sympathy and affinity with and our comprehension of the work of primitives. Like ourselves, these pure artists sought to express only inner and essential feelings in their works; in this process they ignored the fortuitous as a matter of course.”⁹

A rather touching proof of the Blue Rider’s esteem for “primitive” art is Franz Marc’s copy of a self-portrait by the Douanier Rousseau—Patron Saint of all naive painting in the 20th century—on glass which is included in this exhibition (fig. 1). And let it be remembered that two works by Henri Rousseau (from Kandinsky’s own collection) were included in the first Blue Rider show. Moreover, the fact that Kandinsky and Marc decided to have a Bavarian glass painting as the colored frontispiece in the Almanac (a version of the original is included in the current exhibition, fig. 2) in addition to 10 further illustrations of *Hinterglasbilder* and an even greater number of illustrations of other folkloristic and primitive art may well demonstrate their predilection for these bagatelles.

If it is correct that *The Yellow Horse* (cat. no. 1) is the earliest work of Kandinsky in this genre—and there is no reason to doubt the information given by Münter—it is clear why Kandinsky applies pigment in a manner different from that in later works in this style. In fact, Kandinsky was not yet using the glass as a special kind of surface. The character of the brush strokes is in no way different from that put on canvas or panel (compare *The Blue Mountain* in the Guggenheim Museum, which, moreover, shows a similar motif).

The elements of primitivism and religiosity, being the chief characteristics of folkloristic glass painting, converge in the *Last Supper* (cat. no. 2). The curtain to the right, behind which Judas is about to disappear; the striking vase with flowers upon the pedestal (which is highly puzzling); finally the trees to the left, reminiscent of theater decor, make one suspect that the Passion Play of Oberammergau (1910) or some other folk play may have served as an inspiration. Worth noting is the lack of the artistic means of folkloristic glass painting proper: glowing large color areas, simple tonality, "primitive" drawing in black contours. The first technical experiment in the spirit of old glass painting may be the Christ-like Saint on a gold background in the *Study for a Last Supper* (cat. no. 3).

If and when interpretations of uncertain facts appear to be too convincing, even the historian who considers it his task to present his material as conclusively as possible must become sceptical about the truth of his hypotheses: take the case of *Sancta Francisca* (cat. no. 4). St. Francisca of Rome (1340-1440, canonized in 1608) is the Patron Saint and Model of Christian Housewives.¹⁰ On the back of this glass painting is scribbled in a primitive handwriting: "Fanny". Now, Fanny was the nickname of Kandinsky's servant Franziska Dengler, a Bavarian girl who worked in his house since 1902, and the handwriting is hers. She was—as the wife of August Macke recalls in her reminiscences¹¹—"der gute Geist des Hauses". Quite evidently *Sancta Francisca* is not a representation of the Roman Saint but rather a humorous "Hommage à Fanny", the good spirit of his household. The flowers in her hand are not the attributes of a Saint but possibly a birthday bouquet, and the candles certainly do not stand on an altar but on a dining-table with a rural tablecloth. However, what would even be more amusing—assuming that our chronology is correct—would be that Fanny, the Bavarian peasant girl, might not only have inspired this intriguing picture but might also have influenced Kandinsky's style in as much as *Sancta Francisca* is closer to the rural Hinterglasmalerei than any of the earlier examples. Here, for the first time, Kandinsky uses line and color in the traditional manner, and part of the aesthetic pleasure of these paintings derives from the combination of an apparent simplicity with a high artistic refinement.

No guesswork, about its date at least, is necessary in the case of *St. Vladimir* (cat. no. 5). Inscribed on the reverse is "Kandinsky / Gemalt im Juni 1911 / in Murnau".¹² As far as both content and form are concerned, it combines in a striking synthesis, Russian and Bavarian features, elements of the Icon and of the West European votive picture and, last but not least, individual features with general ideas in a somewhat allegorical way. St. Vladimir was the patron saint of the artist, as the author was told by Madame Kandinsky. According to the Russian calendar the 15th of July is the joint Saints'-day of St. Vladimir and St. Vassily;¹³ Vassily, being one of the four Fathers of the Church, and Vladimir, the first Russian prince who accepted the Christian religion and spread it throughout Russia. The bearded face of St. Vladimir in the glass painting resembles that of young Kandinsky. It is, therefore, conceivable that the painter—who was wont to 'hide' or 'enigmatize' his feelings in his works—may have, with playful seriousness, given to the Saint's face his own features. This guess is reinforced once one considers the missionary zeal of the artist, given such unmistakable expression in his book, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*:

"He [the artist] sees and points out. At times he would gladly relinquish this high gift (often a heavy burden). But he cannot."¹⁴

"At the apex of the highest segment¹⁵ often stands one man. His joyful vision is the measure of his inner sorrow."¹⁶

"An invisible Moses descends from the mountain and sees the dancing around the golden calf. But he brings to man fresh stores of wisdom."¹⁷

To what extent do these interpretations, offered here with proper caution, come near to the truth? To answer this, one must venture into the background of Kandinsky's artistic and literary efforts. His concept of the future of painting as a manifestation of the soul in the "epoch of great spirituality" is based on his idea that the materialism of the 19th century must be recognized as such and conquered by the creative men of his own generation. For the time being, he says, artists mirror the "great darkness", as do, for instance, the poet Maurice Maeterlinck, or the painter Alfred Kubin (both of whom he calls "seers of the decadence").¹⁸ To the artist of the future, however, is assigned a function closely resembling that of a priest; he bears a moral as well as an intellectual obligation; he must reimburse for the talent with which he is endowed; his deeds, thoughts and feelings can either purify the spiritual atmosphere of the time—or poison it; his works are either constructive or destructive forces on the way to building the new empire of the spirit. Some passages in his essay make it appear as if the "spiritual in art" might be identical with the "higher worlds" of Theosophy. Towards the end, however, Kandinsky clearly separates himself from Theosophy, calling it one spiritual movement among others, though still extolling it:

"... It remains a fundamentally spiritual movement. This movement represents a strong agent in the general atmosphere, presaging deliverance to oppressed and gloomy hearts."¹⁹

One passage from *Rückblicke* makes completely clear how strongly Kandinsky's thought and art are rooted in religious feelings:

"Art is like religion in many respects. Its development does not consist of new discoveries which strike out the old truths and label them errors (as is apparent in science). Its development consists of sudden illuminations, like lightning, of explosions, which burst like a fireworks in the heavens, strewing a whole 'bouquet' of different shining stars about itself. This illumination shows new perspectives in a blinding light, new truths which are basically nothing more than the organic development, the organic growing of earlier wisdom which is not voided by the later, but as wisdom and truth continues to live and produce. . . . Would the New Testament have been possible without the Old? Would our epoch on the threshold of the 'third' revelation be conceivable without the second?"²⁰

The content and form of most of these *Hinterglashilder* can be understood only in the context of the train of thought indicated here. However, the problems are so complex that full consideration would go far beyond the narrow scope of the *Hinterglashilder* and hence beyond an introduction for this particular exhibition. I shall therefore limit myself to demonstrating, at this point, by a few examples what Kandinsky's conception was.

Most of the motifs of *All Saint's Day* (cat. no. 8) are listed in the catalogue. They originate in different iconographic fields of an eschatological nature. The title was chosen with reference to a related oil painting, to which Kandinsky had given the same title (G. M. S. 71). The gathering of a number of saints (some recognizable, and some not) would justify it. Other figures, however, belong to other realms—the angel with trumpet to the Last Judgement, Noah's Ark and the Dove of Peace to the theme of the Deluge.

In 1912 he painted *The Last Judgement* (cat. no. 18). In it a number of motifs from *All Saint's Day* (cat. no. 8) are repeated but, being transformed into an abstract formal pattern they are barely recognizable. The sleeping monk with a candle has shrunk into a black liplike form in the lower right corner. The wildly curved forms in the upper left of *The Last Judgement* are the "abstractions" of an angel holding a trumpet as in *St. Gabriel* (cat. no. 15). It is not possible to give more details here; the visitor to the exhibition may indulge in tracing a vast number of such derivations. It should be

pointed out, however, that hardly any pattern in the early abstract paintings of Kandinsky cannot be derived from a meaningful form. These paintings may be called "abstract" but certainly not "non-objective". Thus the woodcut from *Klänge* (fig. 3) and the *Study for Composition 7* (both included in the current exhibition) demonstrate further steps to what Kandinsky would have called "spiritualization".

A quotation from an unpublished letter by Kandinsky to Gabriele Münter (January 31, 1904) may demonstrate how early he arrived at his principle of creativity, and how strongly marked and pronounced his "philosophy of art" was, even at a time when his work was still far from abstract, and when, therefore, no self-defense would have been called for: "So funny, people notice in my drawings only the 'decorative', and nothing of the content. But I do not wish to underscore."

"One must only trail a picture's content. To me, obtrusive content is neither beautiful nor noble nor delicate. There must be, almost at once, a beautiful form (to be sure, 'beautiful' must be understood in the artistic sense, which, to the uninitiated, might, perhaps, also be 'unbeautiful'). Sometimes, the beauty in a thing need not be seen right away. At first sight, some things must have the effect of incomprehensibility. Thereafter the beauty will come to the fore, and only then, to the sensitive observer, the inner content. The thing must 'ring', and through this ring one comes, slowly, to the content. This content, however, must never be too clear and too simple; the more possibilities for interpretation through fantasy the better. Different contrasts of forms-feelings are best mixed, if a deep and serious content is to be expected. And the deaf and the blind may just as well pass by undisturbed, without noticing a thing. If he notices anything, it is tough: the thing is then certainly ignoble and cheap. There you have my philosophy of art, about which I generally do not like to talk. But I want you to know it . . ."21



Fig. 3. Woodcut from *Klänge*, Munich 1913.



Fig. 6. Kandinsky. Munich, c. 1913.
Photograph taken by Gabriele Münter.



Fig. 4. *The Deluge*. Lost Kandinsky glass painting, c. 1912.



Fig. 5. *Composition 6*, 1913. U.S.S.R.

Before commenting upon Kandinsky's "Philosophy of Art" and the meaning of the morphological development it seems advisable to quote the artist himself on the relationship between the lost glass painting *Deluge* (cat. no. 33, fig. 4) and *Composition 6* (fig. 5). In the notes following *Rückblicke*²² Kandinsky writes:

"This picture I carried within me for a year and a half, and I often thought that I would not be able to realize it. The point of departure was the *Deluge*, a glass painting, which I made largely for fun. There are several forms, and some of them are amusing: nudes, Noah's Ark, animals, palm trees, lightnings, rain etc. (I enjoyed mingling the serious forms with humorous content). When the glass painting was finished, the wish arose to use this theme for a composition in oil, and it was rather clear to me how I should make it. Soon, however, this feeling of certainty disappeared, and I got lost in figurative forms which I had made only to clarify the concept of the picture. In several sketches I dissolved the forms, in others I tried to attain the impression in a purely abstract manner. But it did not work. And the reason for this was that I succumbed to the literal meaning of "Deluge", instead of obeying the sound of the word "Deluge". I was ruled by the exterior impression rather than by the interior sound. Weeks passed, I tried again and again, but always without success. I also tried the tested remedy of turning away from the task for a while so that at one point I might, suddenly, be able to see the better of the sketches with new eyes.

Indeed, I then did see the right things in them, but I was still unable to separate the nucleus from the skin. I thought of a snake which did not quite succeed in crawling out of its old skin. This skin already looked so terribly dead—but it still hung . . ."

"My glass painting was then away on exhibition. But when it came back and I looked at it again, at once I got the exciting inner shock, which I had experienced after producing the glass painting. But I was already mistrustful and did not believe that I would now be able to make the big picture. Nevertheless, I looked, now and then, at the glass painting, which was hanging in my studio (fig. 6). Each time I was stirred, first by the colors, then by the composition, and finally by the drawn contours, without reference to the subject matter itself. This glass painting had been separated from me. It was strange to me that I should have painted it. And it had the same effect upon me as some objects or concepts that have the power to rouse within me, through a vibration of the soul, purely painterly visions, and end up by making me create pictures . . ."

Continuing this analysis of *Composition 6*, Kandinsky writes almost exclusively of the technical point of view. Now and then, though, there is a reference to the content, for instance, where he speaks of the "dramatic sounding action of the lines", or of a "very abstract-sounding note, reminiscent of the element of hopelessness." In conclusion, however, he writes:

"Thus all elements—even those which contradict themselves—are brought into complete inner equilibrium, so that no single element gets the upper hand. The generating motif—The Deluge—is abandoned, and is transfigured into pure painting. Nothing could be more false than to stamp this picture as the representation of an event."²²

In Kandinsky's vision, therefore, the biblical story of the Deluge did not merely mean a disastrous end but through Noah's Ark also represented "a hymn of the new genesis that follows the catastrophe". Hence the ideas of the Last Judgement and the Resurrection were mingled with his conception of destruction and rebirth. It cannot here be the occasion to deduct the eschatological literature relative to the matter. For Kandinsky's painting it is important that, deriving from all the above mentioned elements, he felt a new "sound" vibrate in his soul. For reasons of "inner necessity" abstract forms appeared to him to be the only way of expressing this vision. Not only *Composition 6* is based on eschatological themes but, as becomes evident in the earliest oil study (included in the current exhibition), also *Composition 7* has a similar meaning and content.

Finally a note on the technique and history of *Hinterglasbilder*, based on the study made by Erika Hanfstaengl:²³

The painting is made on a panel of glass. Everything that is to be closest to the eye of the onlooker—such as details of drawing, highlights and glazings—must be applied first—whereas in painting on canvas or panel they come last. Secondly, the pigments are put on. Many different tricks are possible to enrich the paintings. For instance, colors may be scratched off and the empty spots covered with other colors; metal foil covered with transparent hues may be applied, thus simulating precious stones. A particularly charming effect is obtained by covering the glass with such substances as mercury, tinfoil or gold leaf—thereby creating a mirror behind the picture. Finally some opaque layer is put on. When the picture is finished, the panel is turned so that the viewer sees the composition in reverse.

Examples of *Hinterglasmalerei* have been known in Europe since late Antiquity. The Florentine Cennino Cennini, who lived in the late 14th century, in his book on the art of painting *Il Libro d'Arte* devotes a special chapter to this genre. Most of the known samples belong to the decorative arts and are related to goldsmiths' work. In the 18th century *Hinterglasmalerei* was taken over by amateur painters; it also flourished in rural regions in many parts of Europe.

Generally the designs were copied from prints. These motifs and compositions were retained for generations, with minor changes, and the craftsmanship was often the heritage of certain families who continued to produce these pictures. Through the sale of these objects the country folk who made them augmented their meager income during the winter months. The number of themes was limited. The subjects were chiefly saints who had some connection with the particular region or village.

NOTES

1. Elisabeth Erdmann-Macke, *Erinnerung an August Macke*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1962.
2. Kandinsky and Franz Marc, editors. *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach*, Munich, R. Piper, 1912.
3. Kandinsky, *Klänge*, Munich, R. Piper, 1913. Prose poems with 56 woodcuts.
4. Kandinsky, "Rückblicke", "Notizen-Komposition 6", *Kandinsky, 1901—1913*, Berlin, Der Sturm, 1913.
English translation, "Reminiscences", in Robert L. Herbert, ed. *Modern Artists on Art*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1964. Hereinafter cited as Kandinsky, "Reminiscences".
5. Archives *Der Blaue Reiter*, Städtische Galerie, Munich.
6. Johannes Eichner, *Kandinsky und Gabriele Münter, von Ursprüngen moderner Kunst*, Munich, F. Bruckmann, 1957, p. 91. Klee's relationship to glass painting, though earlier in date, is of quite a different nature. cf. Erika Hanfstaengl, *Hinterglasmalerei im 20. Jahrhundert*, to be published 1967.
In addition to the main source of inspiration for the glass paintings there should be mentioned as a matter of course the Russian Icons and also another folkloristic source, i. e. the so-called "Lubok", two examples of which are included in the current exhibition.
7. On the occasion of an exhibition of works by Gabriele Münter at Stockholm, in 1916, Kandinsky, describing her style, said, among other things, that the artist had "a simple harmony of her own, consisting of exclusively profound colors, whose low tonality stood in a proper relationship to the drawing. Such color harmonies one can see in old German Hinterglasmalereien and also in the works of the German primitives . . ."
8. Kandinsky, "Reminiscences", pp. 30-31.
9. Kandinsky. *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*, Munich, R. Piper, 1912. English translation, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, New York, Wittenborn Schultz, 1947, p. 23. Hereinafter cited as Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*.
10. The Guggenheim painting—unfortunately—cannot be related to St. Francesca Saverio Cabrini, who came to New York in 1888 and became famous as the "mother of emigrants". She founded the order of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and died in Chicago in 1917. She was canonized in 1946.
11. Elisabeth Erdmann-Macke, *op. cit.*, p. 189.
12. Kandinsky / Painted in June 1911 / in Murnau.
13. Kandinsky used to say his prayers every night, as Madame Kandinsky told the author. On July 15th he and his wife would sometimes attend the services of an Orthodox Russian Church and would always go out for dinner and have a very good meal.
14. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, p. 26.
15. Kandinsky compares the spiritual structure of human society to a triangle.
16. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, p. 27.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
20. Kandinsky, "Reminiscences", p. 39.
21. Archives *Der Blaue Reiter*, Städtische Galerie, Munich.
22. Kandinsky, "Notizen — Komposition 6" *Kandinsky, 1901—1913*, Berlin, Der Sturm, 1913, pp. XXV—XXXVIII.
23. Erika Hanfstaengl, *Hinterglasmalerei im 20. Jahrhundert* to be published 1967.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

English titles precede the original German or French.

In measurements, heights precede widths.

Detailed description concerning the technique has not been attempted.

Data published in earlier catalogues of the Städtische Galerie have all been checked or corrected if necessary.

Abbreviations: *Monogram*; Kandinsky often signed his work with a monogram of a K within a circle or triangular form.

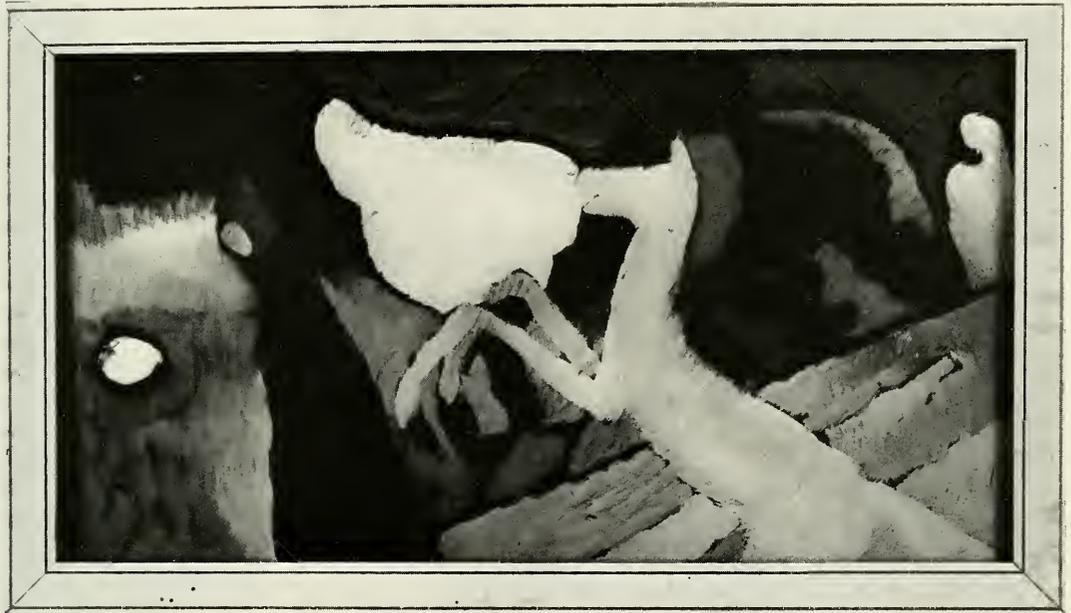
House catalogue no.: The house catalogue referred to is not the general house catalogue of painting but is a separate list of the glass paintings done in 1917-1918 (catalogue nos. 36-52). The two glass paintings made in 1936 are listed in the main house catalogue of paintings as nos. 634, 635. Both are in the possession of Nina Kandinsky.

Grohmann references are from Will Grohmann, *Vassily Kandinsky: Life and Work*, New York, Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1958 (Cologne, Du Mont Schauberg, 1958).

G. M. S.: Gabriele-Münter-Stiftung, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich.

The folkloristic glass paintings, "Ex Voto" pictures and Russian prints ("Lubok") were part of Kandinsky's collection and are the property of the Gabriele-Münter- and Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich.

All works in the exhibition, unless otherwise noted, are lent by the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich.

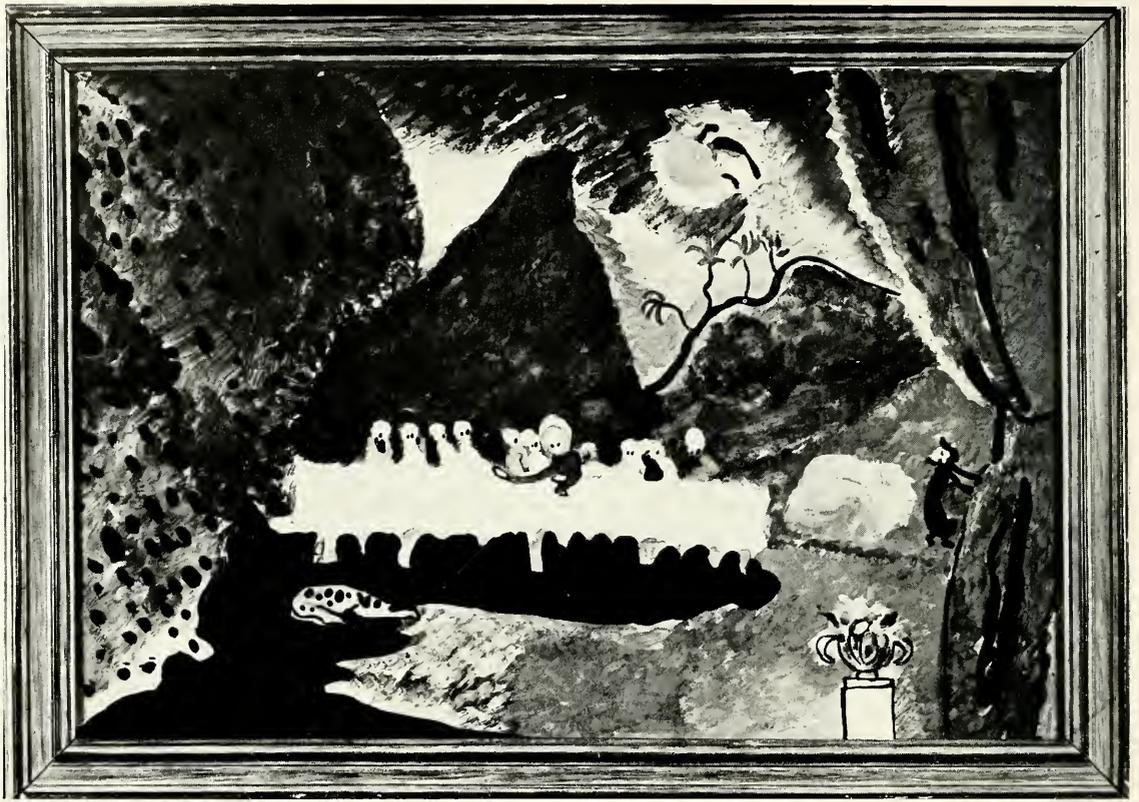


1. THE YELLOW HORSE (MIT GELBEM PFERD). 1909.

$7\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{3}{8}$ " (19.9 × 28.8 cm.). G. M. S. 117.

Inscribed by Gabriele Münter on reverse: "Kandinsky, erstes Glasbild".

Not in Grohmann.



2. LAST SUPPER (ABENDMAHL). 1910.

$9\frac{1}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$ " (23.3 \times 34.2 cm.). G. M. S. 111.

Inscribed by Gabriele Münter on reverse: "Kandinsky 1910".

Not in Grohmann.

Watercolor with composition reversed, $3\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{5}{8}$ " (9.9 \times 14.2 cm.).

G. M. S. 582.

Painted perhaps under the impression of the Oberammergau Passion Play.



3. STUDY FOR A LAST SUPPER (STUDIE ZU EINEM ABENDMAHL). 1910.
3½×2½" (9×7 cm.). G. M. S. 114.
Not in Grohmann.



4. SANCTA FRANCISCA. 1911.

$6\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{5}{8}$ " (15.5 × 11 cm.).

Inscribed: "Sancta Francisca".

Grohmann p. 346, fig. 662.

Collection The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.



5. ST. VLADIMIR (HEILIGER WLADIMIR). 1911.

11³/₈ × 10¹/₈" (29 × 25.6 cm.), G. M. S. 127.

Inscribed u. r.: SVATIJ KNIAŠ VLADIMIR (Holy Prince Vladimir).

Inscribed on reverse: "Kandinsky / Gemalt im Juni 1911 / in Murnau".

Not in Grohmann.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Baptism in the Dnieper.

St. Vladimir appears several times in the glass paintings. There is also a watercolor, Gabriele-Münter- und Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich 12¹/₂ × 12¹/₂" (32.5 × 32.5 cm.). The group of pagans being baptized has been used for a woodcut in *Klänge*.



6. ST. GEORGE I (HEILIGER GEORG I). 1911.

7½ × 7¾" (19 × 19,7 cm.). G. M. S. 105.

Inscribed on reverse: "Kandinsky / gemalt im Juni 1911 / in Murnau".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Not in Grohmann.



7. ST. GEORGE II (HEILIGER GEORG II). 1911.

11³/₄ × 5³/₄" (29.8 × 14.7 cm.). G. M. S. 110.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann p. 346, fig. 668.

Same motif in the color woodcut on the cover of the *Blaue Reiter Almanach*, Munich, 1912; there without the dragon. Hypothetically it might be suggested that the features of the rider could be a physiognomic allusion to Franz Marc.



8. ALL SAINTS' DAY I (ALLERHEILIGEN I). 1911.

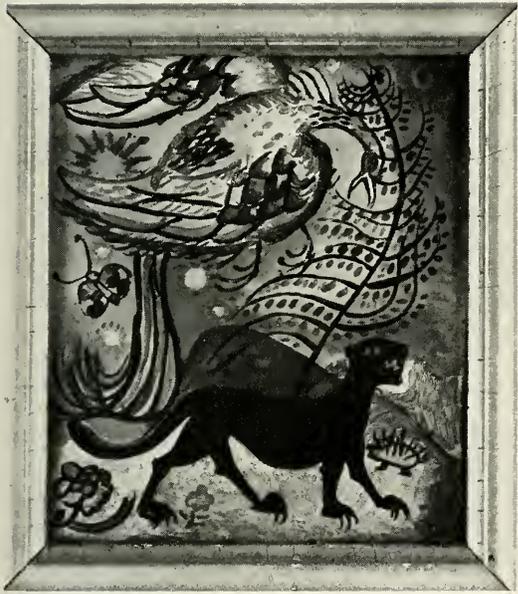
13³/₈ × 16" (34.5 × 40.5 cm.). G. M. S. 107.

Frame painted by Kaudinsky.

Grohmann p. 346, fig. 667.

Was shown in the first exhibition of the *Blaue Reiter*, Munich, 1911 (not listed in the catalogue).

Probably the earliest and definitely the least abstract version of Kandinsky's rendering of eschatological themes like All Saints—Deluge—Last Judgement—Resurrection. Recognizable motifs: Kremlin architecture with sun, Christ crucified, flower, moon, angel with trumpet, Noah's Ark, dove of peace, bird of paradise, butterfly, St. Vladimir, holy knight, female saint with crossed arms, female saint with candle, holy couple embracing, bending woman, crouching female saint, lying monk. Compare with cat. no. 17.



9. FANTASTIC BIRD AND BLACK PANTHER
(PHANTASIEVOGEL UND SCHWARZER PANTHER). 1911. (above left)
 $4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{5}{8}$ " (10.8 × 9.2 cm.). G. M. S. 116.
Inscribed on reverse: "Kandinsky / Juni 1911 / Murnau".
Not in Grohmann.

According to information given to the author by Gabriele Münter,
Kandinsky painted this picture in response to her wish that he
create something especially beautiful for her.

10. RIDER AND APPLE PICKER
(REITER UND APFELPFLÜCKERIN). c. 1911. (above right)
 $6\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ " (15.5 × 16 cm.).
Frame painted by Kandinsky.
Grohmann p. 346, fig. 660, titled "Mythological Scene" and dated 1908.
Collection Dr. Helmut Beck, Stuttgart.



11. LION HUNT (LÖWENJAGD). c. 1911. (above)

$3\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ " (9.5 × 13.9 cm.).

Inscribed l.l.: "Löwenjagd".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Not in Grohmann.

Collection Mrs. Annemarie Rose (née Münter), Ratingen, Germany.

According to an information given to the author by Gabriele Münter,

LION HUNT was painted for her niece, the present owner.



12. ANGEL OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT

(ENGEL DES JÜNGSTEN GERICHTS). 1911. (below preceding page)

10¹/₄ × 6³/₄" (26 × 17 cm.). G. M. S. 113.

Inscribed on reverse: "Kandinsky / Gemalt im August 1911 / in Murnau".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346.

13. RESURRECTION (AUFERSTEHUNG). 1911. (above left)

8¹/₂ × 4⁵/₈" (21.7 × 11.6 cm.). G. M. S. 112.

Inscribed l. r. in Cyrillic letters: VOSKRESENJE (Resurrection).

Inscribed on reverse: "Kandinsky / Gemalt im August 1911 / in Murnau".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346, fig. 664.

Same motif in oil painting (1910), Collection Joseph H. Hazen, New York.

This version makes it clear that the kneeling figure is covering its ears and not taking off its head.

14. LARGE RESURRECTION (GROSSE AUFERSTEHUNG). 1911. (above right)

9³/₈ × 9¹/₂" (23.8 × 24 cm.). G. M. S. 125.

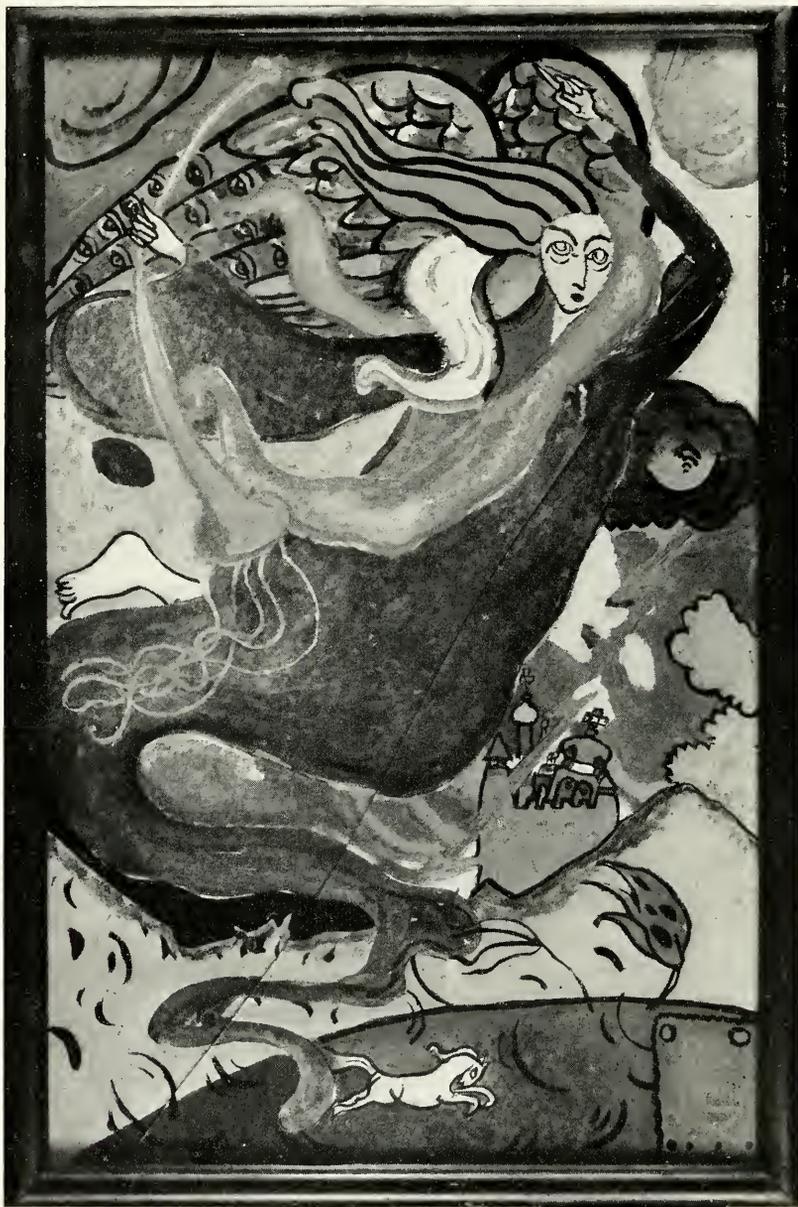
Monogram I. 1.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann p. 346, fig. 666.

A watercolor with a similar motif G. M. S. 457, 8⁵/₈ × 8³/₄" (21.7 × 21.9 cm.)

Dated according to several letters from Kandinsky to Gabriele Münter of June and July 1911, where he says that he is working on the woodcut "with angel's trumpet" after his glass painting. The woodcut referred to appeared in *Klänge*. Compare also the woodcut for the cover of *On the Spiritual in Art*.



15. ST. GABRIEL (DER HEILIGE GABRIEL). c. 1911.

15³/₄ × 10" (40 × 25.3 cm.), G. M. S. 123.

Inscribed l. r. in Cyrillic letters: GAB/RIEL.

Not in Grohmann.

According to information given by Münter to the author, Kandinsky painted this for her because of her Christian name Gabriele.



16. HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE I. 1911.

(APOKALYPTISCHE REITER I).

11⁵/₈ × 8" (29.5 × 20.3 cm.). G. M. S. 121.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346, fig. 665, titled "Horsemen".

Dated by Kandinsky on an old photograph "1911". Published by the artist in *Sturm-Album*, Berlin 1913, p. 42 with the year 1910. Exhibited in the first *Blaue Reiter* exhibition Munich 1911, according to a label on the reverse.

Only three of the four horsemen of the apocalypse with their attributes of sword, scales, and bow and arrow are shown. In the lower left is St. John of Patmos, fed by a raven, like Elijah in the desert.



17. ALL SAINTS' DAY II (ALLERHEILIGEN II). 1911.

$12\frac{3}{8} \times 18\frac{7}{8}$ " (31.3 × 48 cm.). G. M. S. 122.

Monogram l.r.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346.

Compare with cat. no. 8: "All Saints' Day I".

Preparatory watercolor G. M. S. 616, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{7}{8}$ " (31.6 × 48 cm.); for the title see also the oil paintings G. M. S. 62, $33\frac{7}{8} \times 39$ " (86 × 99 cm.) and G. M. S. 71, $19\frac{3}{4} \times 25\frac{3}{8}$ " (50 × 64.5 cm.).

Recognizable motifs: sun, ascension of Elijah, angel blowing on a trumpet, a rower, an ecclesiastical architecture, embracing couple, Saint Martin (?), tree with sickle-shaped branches, saint with raised arms.



18. THE LAST JUDGEMENT (JÜNGSTER TAG). 1912.

$13\frac{3}{8} \times 17\frac{3}{4}$ " (34 × 45 cm.).

Monogram l. r.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346, fig. 663.

Collection Nina Kandinsky, Neuilly-sur-Seine.

Called "Jüngster Tag" and dated 1912 by Kandinsky on an old photograph.

Preparatory watercolor G. M. S. 147, $11\frac{7}{8} \times 16\frac{7}{4}$ " (29 × 42.9 cm.).

Similar motif in a watercolor in the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Note the increased abstraction of the woodcut in *Klänge*, fig. 3.

For the derivation of several motifs see cat. nos. 8, 12, 14, 17.



22. COW IN MOSCOW (KUH IN MOSKAU). 1912.

11 × 12⁵/₈" (28 × 32.2 cm.). G. M. S. 109.

Monogram: I. I.

Inscribed on reverse: "Gemalt in Murnau: Mai 1912 / Kuh in Moskau".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346.

There is also a watercolor, 11 × 12³/₄" (28 × 32.2 cm.) in the Gabriele-Münter- und Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich.



23. LADY IN MOSCOW (DAME IN MOSKAU). c. 1912.

$13\frac{1}{8} \times 12''$ (33.2 \times 30.6 cm.). G. M. S. 124.

Monogram: 1. 1.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Not in Grohmann.

Same motif as in the oil painting G. M. S. 73, $42\frac{7}{8} \times 42\frac{7}{8}''$ (108.8 \times 108.8 cm.)

and the watercolor, $12\frac{1}{2} \times 11''$ (31.6 \times 28 cm.) in the Gabriele-

Münter- und Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich.



24. GENTLEMAN WITH TRUMPET (KAVALIER MIT TROMPETE). c. 1912.
12⁵/₈ × 10⁷/₈" (30.5 × 19.9 cm.). G. M. S. 128.
Monogram: 1, 1.
Frame painted by Kandinsky.
Not in Grohmann.



25. THE SWAN (MIT SCHWAN). c.1912.

$12\frac{5}{8} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ " (32 × 27.7 cm.). G. M. S. 118.

Monogram: 1. 1.

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Not in Grohmann.

Compare subject with the watercolor, *The Annunciation of Der Blaue Reiter*, 1912, which because of its increased abstraction is probably later in date. A female nude reclines on a rock in the upper right.





26. PINCE-NEZ (MIT KNEIFER). 1912. (above)

11 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 9" (29 × 23 cm.).

Monogram: 1. r.

Inscribed on reverse: "Glasbild mit Kneifer / Murnau 1912".

Frame painted by Kandinsky.

Grohmann, p. 346, fig. 670.

Collection Nina Kandinsky, Neuilly-sur-Seine.

Two faces, one with "pince-nez" (Kandinsky's self-portrait), appear in the lower third of the picture near the right edge. Further motifs: ship, gravestones, church steeple, crocodiles, houses, tree, cart with two wheels, a cat.

27. THE RED SPOT (MIT ROTEM FLECK). c. 1913. (above preceding page)

10 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (27.2 × 24.4 cm.). G. M. S. 126.

Monogram: 1. 1.

Grohmann, p. 346.

28. ST. GEORGE III (HEILIGER GEORG III). c. 1913. (below preceding page)

9 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (23.8 × 23.5 cm.).

Not in Grohmann.



29. HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE II 1914.

(APOKALYPTISCHE REITER II).

13 × 8³/₈" (30 × 21.3 cm.). G. M. S. 106.

Grohmann, p. 346, fig. 669.

An almost identical pen drawing which was on the Swiss art market is dated 6. VII. 14 on the reverse. Compare with the earlier version of the subject, cat. no. 16. Here, too, only three of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse appear. In the lowest part of the oval, at the right, is St. John of Patmos.



30. SKETCH FOR THE HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE II. 1914.
(SKIZZE ZU DEN APOKALYPTISCHEN REITERN II).
5¹/₈ × 3⁷/₈" (13 × 9.8 cm.). G. M. S. 115.



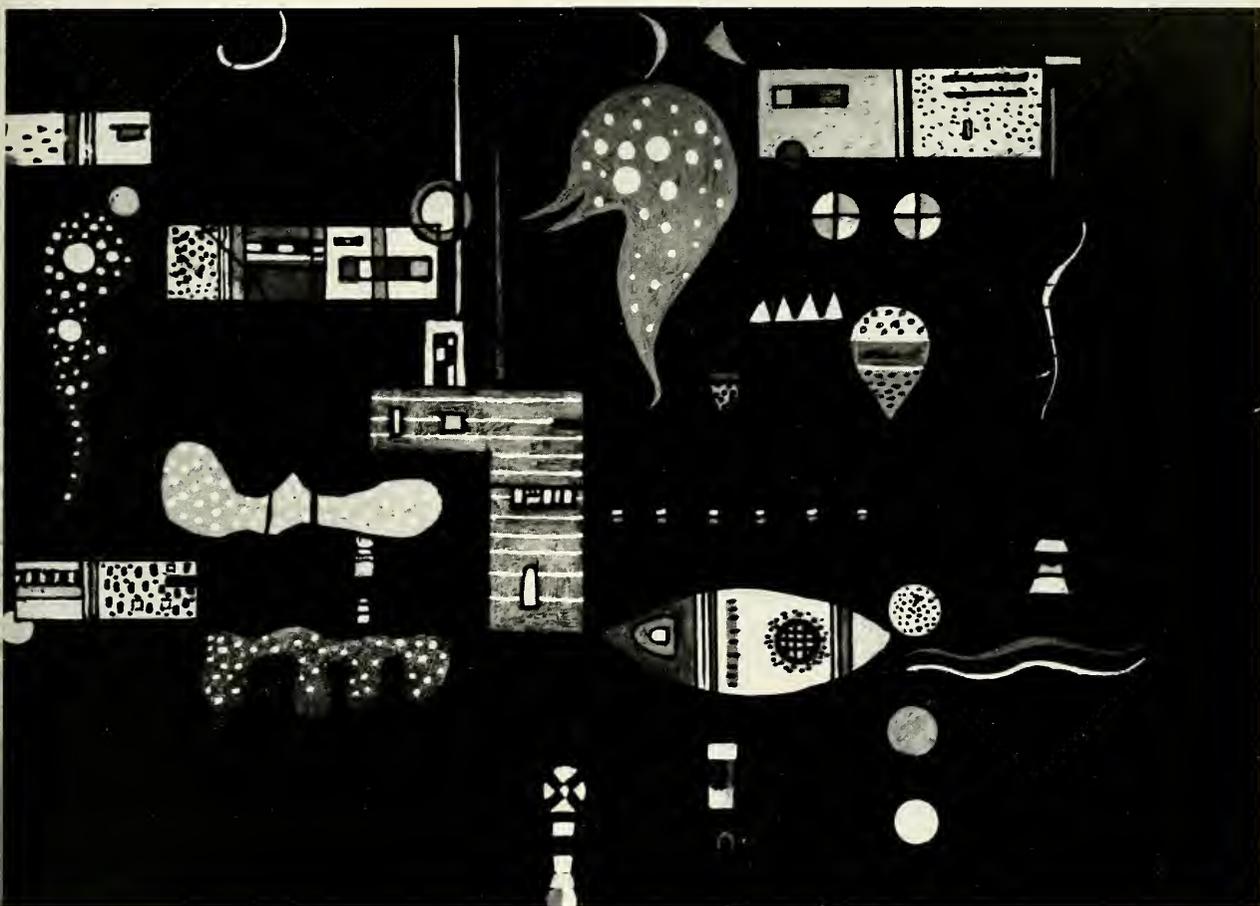
31. FORMS IN TENSION (FORMES EN TENSION). 1936.

12 × 15³/₄" (30 × 40 cm.).

Monogram: I. I.

House catalogue no. 634. Grohmann, p. 340, fig. 458.

Collection Nina Kandinsky, Neuilly-sur-Seine.



32. STABILITY (STABILITÉ). 1936.

12 × 15³/₄" (30 × 40 cm.).

Monogram: I, I.

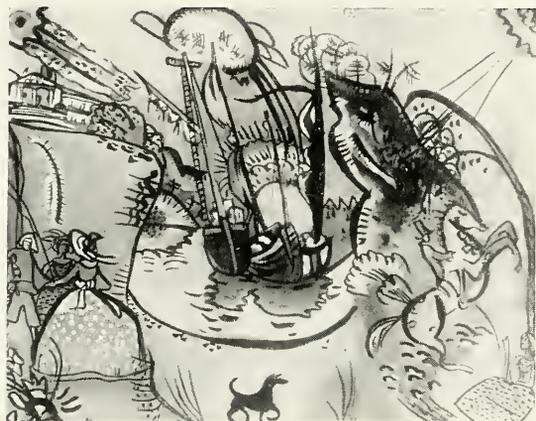
House catalogue no. 635. Grohmann, p. 340, fig. 459.

Private Collection.



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WORKS NOT IN THE EXHIBITION



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33. DELUGE (SINTFLUT). c. 1912.
Not in Grohmann.
Lost.
34. PORT (HAFEN). 1916.
 $8\frac{3}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ " (21.4 × 26.5 cm.).
Monogram and date: l. l.
Not in house catalogue;
Grohmann, p. 346, as *With Sailboats*, (not ill.).
Collection Tretjakoff Gallery, Moscow.
35. AMAZON (AMAZONE). 1917.
 $7\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ " (18.9 × 19 cm.).
Monogram and date: l. l.
Not in house catalogue; Grohmann, p. 346, (not ill.).
Collection Tretjakoff Gallery, Moscow.
36. SEATED LADY
(MIT EINER DAME IM GRÜNEN). 1917.
 $6\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$ " (17 × 16 cm.).
Monogram and date: l. l.
House catalogue no. 1; not in Grohmann.
Collection Tretjakoff Gallery, Moscow.
37. OFFICER (MIT EINEM OFFIZIER). 1917.
House catalogue no. 2; not in Grohmann.
Lost.
38. BOUQUET (MIT DEM STRAUSS). 1918.
House catalogue no. 3; not in Grohmann.
Lost.
39. WATERFALL (MIT WASSERFALL). 1918.
House catalogue no. 4; not in Grohmann.
Lost.
40. UNKNOWN SAINT (MIT HEILIGEM). 1918.
House catalogue no. 5; not in Grohmann.
Lost.
41. COWS (MIT DEN KÜHEN). 1918.
House catalogue no. 6; not in Grohmann.
Lost.
42. FRUIT (MIT OBST). 1918.
House catalogue no. 7; not in Grohmann.
Lost.

43. GOLDEN CLOUD
(MIT GOLDENER WOLKE). 1918.
97/8 × 12 1/8" (25 × 31 cm.).
Monogram I.I.
House catalogue no. 8; not in Grohmann.
Collection Russian State Museum, Leningrad.



44. GREEN HORSEMAN
(MIT GRÜNEM REITER). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
House catalogue no. 9; not in Grohmann.
Present of Kandinsky to his mother-in-law.
Collection Mme. de Andreevsky, Moscow.

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45. HOBBY HORSE
(MIT DEM SPIELZEUGPFERD). 1918.
97/8 × 12 1/8" (25 × 31 cm.).
Monogram: I. I.
House catalogue no. 10;
Grohmann, p. 346, no. 671 as 1917.
Collection Tretjakoff Gallery, Moscow.



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46. WHITE CLOUD (MIT WEISSER WOLKE). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
House catalogue no. 11; not in Grohmann.
Collection Russian State Museum, Leningrad.

47. BOYAR (MIT EINEM BOJAREN). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
House catalogue no. 12; not in Grohmann.
Lost.

48. AMAZON IN YELLOW (AMAZONE GELB). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
House catalogue no. 13; not in Grohmann.
Lost.

49. AMAZON IN BLUE (AMAZONE BLAU). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
Monogram I.I.
House catalogue no. 14; not in Grohmann.
Collection Russian State Museum, Leningrad.



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50. PINK HORSEMAN
(REITER MIT ROSA HEMD). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
House catalogue no. 15; not in Grohmann.
Lost.

51. MUSICIANS (MIT MUSIKANTEN). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
Monogram I.I.
House catalogue no. 16; not in Grohmann.
Lost.



52. AMAZON IN THE HILLS
(AMAZONE IN DEN BERGEN). 1918.
12 1/8 × 9 7/8" (31 × 25 cm.).
Monogram I.I.
House catalogue no. 17; not in Grohmann.
Collection Russian State Museum, Leningrad.

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1071 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 10028