

## Two passages from Kandinsky's writings about art

“The image does not last long: a few minutes, and the sunlight grows red with effort, redder and redder, cold at first, and then increasing in warmth. The sun dissolves the whole of Moscow into a single spot, which, like a wild tuba, sets all one’s soul vibrating. No, this red fusion is not the most beautiful hour! It is only the final chord of the symphony, which brings every color vividly to life, which allows and forces the whole of Moscow to resound like the *fff* of a giant orchestra. Pink, lilac, yellow, white, blue, pistachio green, flame red houses, churches, each an independent song – the garish green of the grass, the deeper tremolo of the trees, the singing snow with its thousand voices, or the *allegretto* of the bare branches, the red, still, silent ring of the Kremlin walls.....To paint this hour, I thought, must be for an artist the most impossible, the greatest joy.”<sup>1</sup>

“1. The direct impression of ‘external nature,’ expressed in linear-painterly form. I call these pictures ‘Impressions.’

2. Chiefly unconscious...impressions of ‘internal nature.’ I call this type ‘Improvisations.’

3. The expressions of feelings that have been forming within me in a similar way (but over a very long period of time), which, after the first preliminary sketches, I have slowly and almost pedantically examined and worked out. This kind of picture I call a ‘Composition.’ Here, reason, the conscious, the deliberate, and the purposeful play a preponderant role. Except that I always decided in favor of feeling rather than calculation.”<sup>2</sup>

1. Kandinsky, written before 1913, quoted in Annegret Hoberg, “Vasily Kandinsky: Abstract, Absolute, Concrete,” in *Kandinsky* (NY: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), p. 25.

2. Kandinsky’s description of his three categories of artwork, from his book, *On the Spiritual in Art*, and cited in Hoberg, p. 30.