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The Noisy Paint Box: The Colors And Sounds Of Kandinsky's Abstract Art



Synopsis

A Caldecott Honor Book Vasya Kandinsky was a proper little boy: he studied math and history, he practiced the piano, he sat up straight and was perfectly polite. And when his family sent him to art classes, they expected him to paint pretty houses and flowers "like a proper artist. " But as Vasya opened his paint box and began mixing the reds, the yellows, the blues, he heard a strange sound "the swirling colors trilled like an orchestra tuning up for a symphony! And as he grew older, he continued to hear brilliant colors singing and see vibrant sounds dancing. But was Vasya brave enough to put aside his proper still lifes and portraits and paint . . . music? " In this exuberant celebration of creativity, Barb Rosenstock and Mary GrandPr  tell the fascinating story of Vasily Kandinsky, one of the very first painters of abstract art. Throughout his life, Kandinsky experienced colors as sounds, and sounds as colors "and bold, groundbreaking works burst forth from his noisy paint box. " Backmatter includes four paintings by Kandinsky, an author's note, sources, links to websites on synesthesia and abstract art.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

Gr 1&4 "A stirring tribute to a prominent pioneer of abstract art, Paintbox follows the life of Russian-born artist Vasya Kandinsky from his childhood to adulthood, conveying the astounding imagery conjured in the painter's (probably genetic) condition, synesthesia, which caused sensory

fields to collide in explosions that enabled him, for example, to hear colors. In this delightful homage, Rosenstock's crisp visual language unites with GrandPré's deeply expressive and whimsical paintings to re-create the intriguing world of art as seen through Kandinsky's distinct lens. The book offers diverse potential for different types of study, whether one is reading for information or for pleasure. Outstanding.â "Kathryn Diman, Bass Harbor Memorial Library, Bernard, ME

Starred Review Richly colored, large acrylic paint and paper collage pictures illustrate the life of Vasily Kandinsky, one of the first painters of abstract art. As a young boy, Vasya was given a paint box, and when he first mixed colors, he was amazed to find he could hear the colors he created. Throughout his early life, Kandinsky struggled to live as others expected but couldn't forget his exhilarating experiences with painting. Even after giving in and taking lessons, he was unable to suppress the need to create his own style of art. He would see colors and hear music, hear music and see colors. Art should make you feel. Like music. Narrow white frames surround the wonderfully dense illustrations that reveal the sounds the colors make to the artist. The rich word choice is a delight: pistachio, cobalt, and saffron introduce readers to colors while hissing, blaring, and whispering reveal the sounds of the colors. This not a full biography, but rather a revelation of a real and talented person striving to express himself and succeeding. The author's note and source list impart more information. This is a beautiful blend of colors, music, and life. Grades K-2.

--Maryann Owen

Creative approach to learning about artists and how even when they are young they see, feel, and hear the world in a unique way. Since the schools are cutting money for art this book shows children talented in art that other artists feel the way they do about painting even seeing colors as sounds. K-6th grades and even pre-schools could enrich their art impoverished programs by reading this book to the class.

Delightful illustrations and interesting context. I always learn a lot from children's books because they are not only less wordy but also capture the essence of the person written about. For example, the theme is really about Kandinsky's thought processes and how he "hears" colors. Come to find out he had a condition called synesthesia. This little known fact was never mentioned in other accounts about this painter. However, when you look at his paintings, it makes perfect sense.

As the mom of a child who is a square peg in a round world, I couldn't love this book more. Such

great visuals to drive home the unhappiness that comes from trying to force a beautiful mind to fit into a bland world. I loved watching my boy light up as the colors grew brighter and the artist boldly broke out of his humdrum world to burst forth into his full potential. Every kid being stifled in early elementary by being told to color between the lines should read this book in hopes that they pursue the full depth of their potential instead of being pressed into the dull shades of those who don't choose to keep that bright light of creativity shining.

Beautifully illustrated book that explains the art and meaning of Kandinsky's art. I read this book to my 3rd graders to help them understand how music and art influence each other.

I love teaching Kandinsky to all levels and this book does a great job of detailing the power of art and influence of music in young Vasya's life. It teaches to listen to the art inside of you and to take risks to do new things. The message is a great one for all ages and levels of artists- and adults could probably learn a thing or two as well. Can't wait to use this in my classroom to introduce abstract art- so great to have such a lovely story about the father of abstract art to do so!

My son and I both loved the book! Ms. Rosenstock brilliantly captures Kandinski's "awakening" with her words. And the accompanying pictures are a dazzling illustration of how his world came alive to color. Thank you to both the writer and illustrator!

Fabulous book. Upon recommendation from a fellow artist, I got it for my 8-year-old grandson who's shown an interest and aptitude for art. But I ended up keeping for myself for a while. As you would expect, wonderful illustrations.

THE STORY IS GREAT. THE ILLUSTRATIONS ARE POWERFUL AND EXCITING. THE STORY IS MOVING AND INSPIRATIONAL. I AM SO GLAD TO HAVE IT.

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