

Abstract Art

The first examples

What is abstract art?

- Abstract art is a movement away from recognizable imagery, it can be partial or total.
- The romanticism, impressionism, and expressionism movements led to the abstract movement
- Abstract art often focuses on emotions and feelings in art, rather than actual images.

Wassily Kandinsky

- Accredited with painting the first “pure” abstract artwork
- Born in Moscow in 1866
- Died in 1944 (78)
- Originally went to school for law and economics
- Didn't start painting until he was 30
- During WWII he moved to France where he became a citizen and lived for the rest of



Early Work



- He started out with more impressionist and landscape focused work
- He slowly moved towards abstraction
- He partially credits this to his fascination with color as a child and his desire to highlight that
- He was heavily influenced by Claude Monet

Kandinsky's Abstract Art

- Often influenced by music
- The purpose is not to represent something physical, but to express human emotion and inner feelings
- Kandinsky often referred to his artwork as “improvisations” and “compositions”
- Later his abstractions included geometric forms











Piet Mondrian



- Born in the Netherlands in 1872
- Died in 1944
- Studied to become an elementary teacher, but painted on the side
- Moved to Paris in the early 1900's
- Was heavily influenced by cubism and Picasso
- He later moved to New York where he stayed until he died

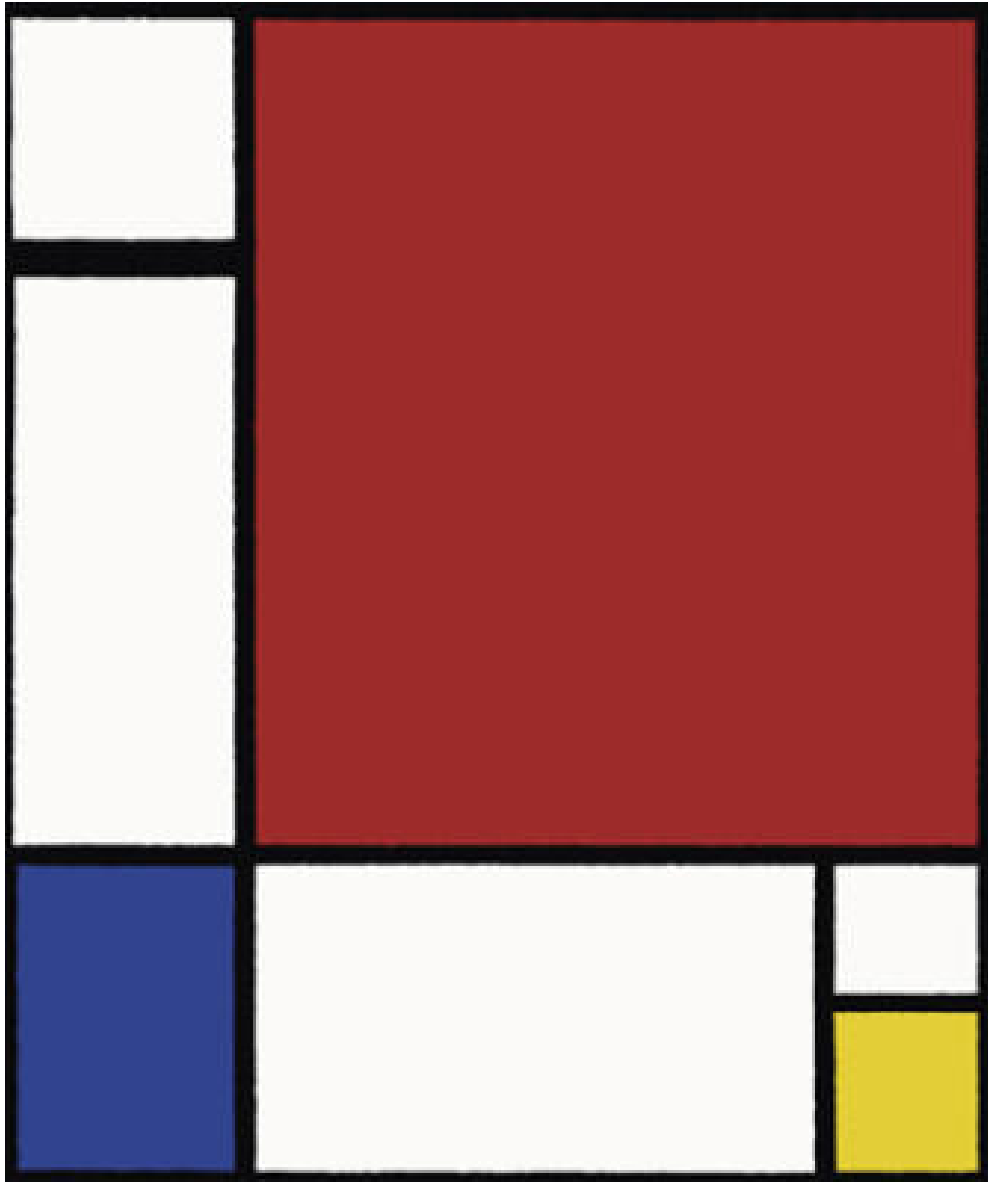


Early Work

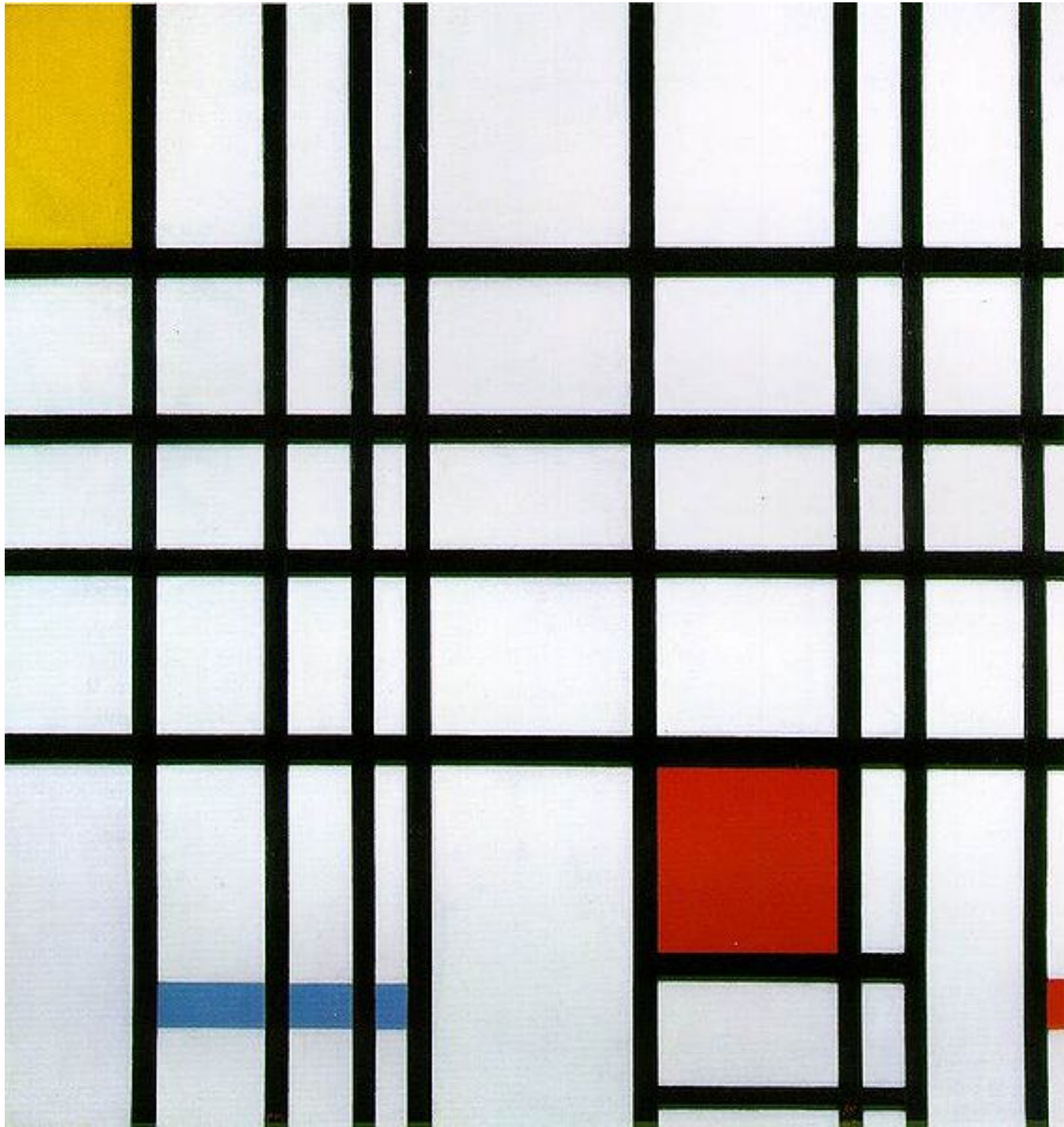
- He mainly studied landscapes
- He painted in large sections using a variety of colors

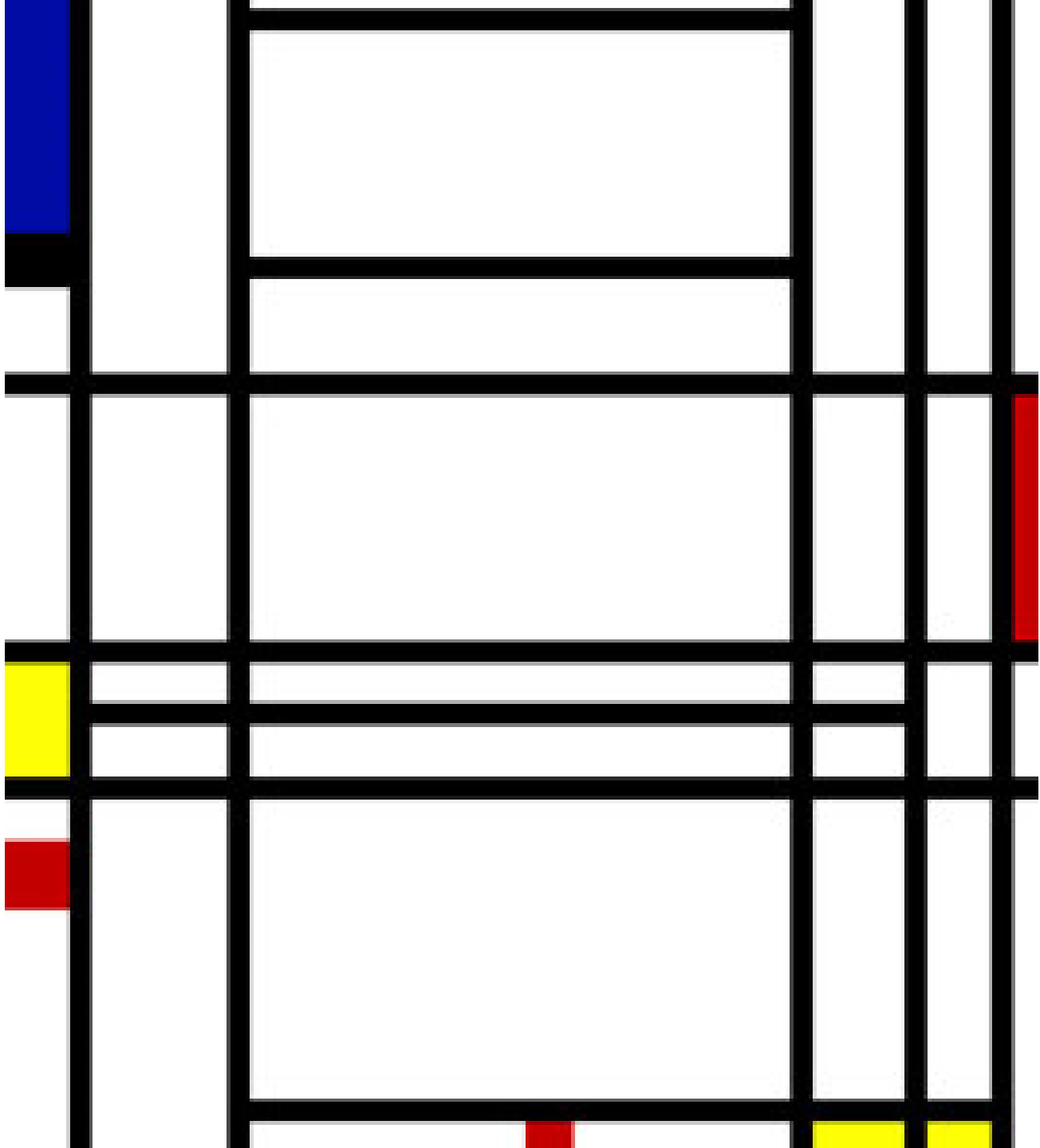


Abstract Work

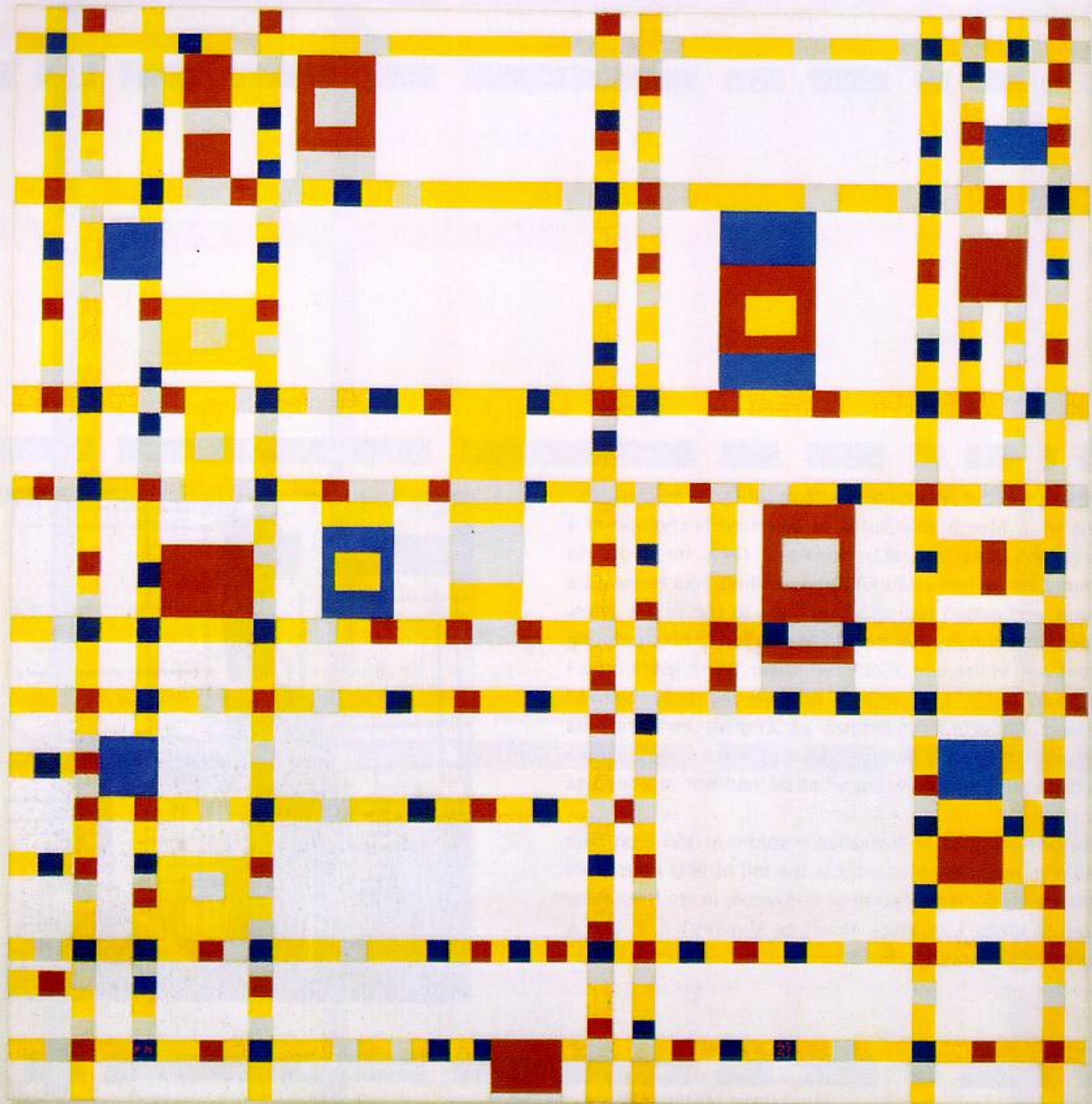


- In the 1920's he began creating his rectangular, primary color focused paintings





“I construct lines and color combinations on a flat surface, in order to express general beauty with the utmost awareness. Nature (or, that which I see) inspires me, puts me, as with any painter, in an emotional state so that an urge comes about to make something, but I want to come as close as possible to the truth and abstract everything from that, until I reach the foundation (still just an external foundation!) of things...”



Success in Abstract Art

- A plan
- Balance
- Emphasis
- A focal point
- Inspiration from a specific place

Your Assignment

- Create a 1"x1" viewfinder
- Flip through magazines and use the viewfinder to crop images
- Find an image that is aesthetically pleasing to you
- Draw it and paint it
- Write about it: What drew you to the image, is it a successful abstract painting?

The End