

KOSMOS



Press kit

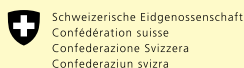
The collection

KLEE

Zentrum Paul Klee
Bern

Gegründet von
Maurice E. und Martha Müller
sowie den Erben Paul Klee

Mit der Unterstützung von:



Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI
Bundesamt für Kultur BAK



Burggemeinde
Bern

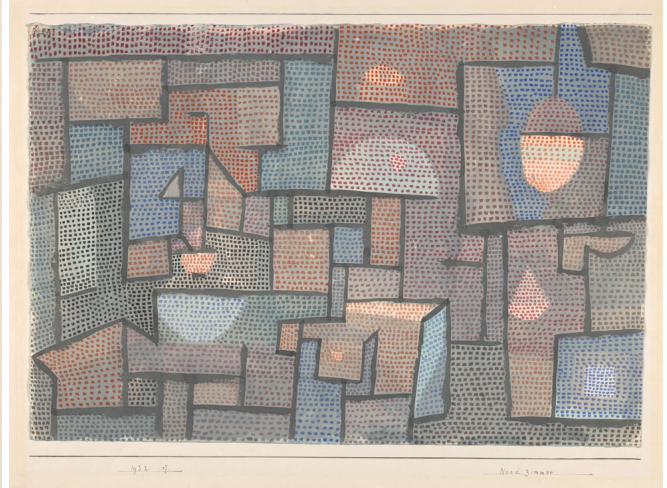


Zentrum Paul Klee
Bern

Founded by
Maurice E. and Martha Müller
and the heirs of Paul Klee

Press kit
14 October 2024

Kosmos Klee. The Collection
Fokus. Journals of the Avant-Garde



Welcome to Kosmos Klee!

The dynamic permanent exhibition devoted to Paul Klee invites visitors to immerse themselves in the life and work of this important modern artist. With some 80 changing works from the collection, *Kosmos Klee* offers a chronological survey of Klee's artistic career. Biographical and archival material provide an insight into his life and time. In addition, the 'focus room' offers a space for smaller exhibitions devoted to individual aspects of Klee's work, or contributions to the artist's global reception.

The collection

The Zentrum Paul Klee is the world's most important centre for research into Paul Klee's life and work, and has one of the most significant collections of the artist's drawings, watercolours and paintings. Paul Klee was primarily a draughtsman, which is why 80% of the collection of the Zentrum Paul Klee consists of works on paper, matching the collected works. Because of the fragility of the works as well as the large size and diversity of the collection, only parts of it can be displayed at once. Klee enjoyed experimenting, not only in terms of content and form but also technically, using light-sensitive paints, inks and papers. For that reason the works need periods of rest between periods on display.

Kosmos Klee

With *Kosmos Klee. The Collection* the Zentrum Paul Klee offers visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in Paul Klee's life and work, as well as in the unique collection of the institution. Some 80 rotating and chronologically organised works provide an overview of Klee's artistic development, from the highly detailed early works via tendencies towards abstraction and the discovery of colour, to the reduced pictorial language of the later work.

Each decade of Klee's artistic career is identified by a colour in the exhibition, allowing visitors to find their way intuitively around the space. Brief introductory texts, biographical photographs and films give deeper insights into the different phases of the work and Paul Klee's engagement with the people around him.

Aside from his works, the Zentrum Klee also preserves the artist's archive. In the dynamic permanent exhibition, different treasures from the archive are presented, revealing the various aspects of Paul Klee's life. His love of music is reflected in his record collection and the scores that Klee, a gifted violinist, played from. Klee's favourite music can be heard as part of a podcast in the exhibition. Parts of the artist's collection of natural materials, including shells, stones and pages from herbariums, display Klee's close relationship with nature and natural processes. Other objects include his watercolour box, his schoolbooks, scribbled over with drawings, as well as letters.

Fokus

One part of some 100 m² in area of the permanent exhibition is reserved for the series *Fokus*. Smaller exhibitions focus on particular aspects of Klee's work, present works of artists with surprising references to Klee and follow the global Klee reception. The current presentation is dedicated to the journals of the Avant-Garde.

Unpacking Klee

Since June 2024, new episodes of the short film series *Unpacking Klee* are being released regularly and shown in the exhibition and on the Zentrum Paul Klee's YouTube channel. 10 sequences guide the viewer through the depot of the Zentrum Paul Klee, which holds not only art works but also the world's most comprehensive Paul Klee archive. It includes diaries, passports, the correspondence, photographs, musical notes, records, a violin and a grand piano, a collection of natural materials, books, studio utensils and more. Behind the scenes treasures are unpacked to show what the objects tell us about Paul Klee's life and work.

youtube.com/ZentrumPaulKlee

1. Shells
2. Paul Klee's passports
3. Studio utensils for the coloured paste technique
4. Hand puppets
5. Children's drawings
6. Catalogues of the artist's œuvre
7. Studio utensils for the spraying technique
8. Photographs of cats
9. Music
10. Schoolbooks

Digital Guide

The exhibition is accompanied by a digital guide offering thematic tours of the exhibition with changing emphases, a biographical overview and a study of historical and historico-cultural events and themes that were important to Klee's work.





Digitorial® on Paul Klee's travels

The Digitorial® presents five of Paul Klee's most important journeys and illustrates his artistic development from bewildered student to one of the most important artists of the modern period. The five chapters are dedicated to the artist's first journey to Italy in 1901, his 1912 journey to Paris where he visited Robert Delauney, among others, the now legendary study tour to Tunisia with Louis Moilliet and August Macke, one of Klee's trips to the south to recover from his teaching activity at the Bauhaus, and the 1928 journey to Egypt that was made possible by the Klee Society.

mappingklee.zpk.org/en/

Curator of the current display

Martin Waldmeier

Guided tours in English

Sunday, 15 December 2024, 15:00

With the support of

Kanton Bern, Bundesamt für Kultur BAK, Bürgergemeinde Bern

Fokus. Journals of the Avant-Garde

19.10.2024–16.2.2025

Between 19 October 2024 and 16 February 2025, in the context of its permanent exhibition, the Zentrum Paul Klee is focusing thematically on the journals of the avant-garde. With some 150 exhibits, attention is devoted to the journal as an artistic field of experimentation.

In the early 20th century, journals became an important medium in art – from Futurism via Dadaism to Surrealism and beyond. The focus exhibition *Journals of the Avant-Garde* displays 15 different journals, worth both seeing and reading, while at the same time exploring the contents and design of magazines as a field of artistic experimentation.

The phenomenon of the artistic 'avant-garde' evolved in Europe in the 1910s. Between 1910 and 1933 numerous currents came into being, many of which published their own journals to put out their vision of art and society and draw attention to themselves. Today, journals with titles such as *MERZ*, *Cabaret Voltaire*, *Sturm*, *Kentiku Sekai* and *Habitat* are among the most significant documents of global modernism.

Their often extremely innovative design is particularly fascinating: many avant-garde journals used design and typography as an opportunity to make radical ideas and concepts visually accessible. They picked up expressive typefaces, colours and forms and worked with exciting combinations of text and image to signal dynamism and the break with tradition. This makes them forerunners of modern visual communication and advertising design, which works with the same principles. Another innovation was that many avant-garde journals were published multilingually, or contained content in different languages. This multilingualism reflects the lived reality of many representatives of modern art, who lived in exile during the period of the world wars, for example, or who were migrants. Avant-garde-minded artists often had global networks, and forged and nurtured alliances across national borders.

For the artists involved, publishing their own journals or contributing to them had numerous advantages. The most important of these lay in making their own theories and works visible, and allowing them to circulate in the art world. Most avant-garde journals were read primarily by other cultural creators or collectors, and barely by the 'wide' public. So it can hardly come as a surprise that many important titles are closely connected with central protagonists of modern art, such as the Berlin gallery-owner Herwarth Walden, the artist Tommaso Filippo Marinetti or Le Corbusier.

One interesting detail that can be found in many avant-garde journals is the advertising pages for other avant-garde journals. Their programmes could sometimes be very different, but there is often a common denominator – the demand for a radical new beginning, the rejection of the cultural and institutional establishment, the desire for self-assertion and a delight in experiment.

Press images *Fokus. Journals of the Avant-Garde*

Download press images:
zpk.org/en/about-us/media

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01

Bauhaus. Zeitschrift für Gestaltung, Jg. 2, no 1, 1928, 15 issues (1926–1931)



02

291, no 5-6, 1915, journal published by Alfred Stieglitz in New York, 12 issues (1915–1916)



03

Minotaure, no 3-4, 1933, journal published by Albert Skira in Paris, 12 issues (1933–1939)

Press images *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*

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04

Paul and Lily Klee with the cat
Bimbo, Kistlerweg 6, Bern, 1935
Photo: Fee Meisel



05

Paul Klee
Ohne Titel (Villa am Langensee)
[*Untitled (Villa at the Langensee)*],
1896

Watercolour on paper
9,9 × 15 cm

Private collection, Switzerland,
deposit at the im Zentrum Paul
Klee, Bern



06

Paul Klee
Ohne Titel (Rückenakt) [*Nude from
Behind*], 1902

Pencil on paper on cardboard
32,5 × 28,5 cm

Private collection, Switzerland,
deposit at the im Zentrum Paul
Klee, Bern



07

Paul Klee
In den Häusern v. St. Germain [*In
the Houses of St. Germain*], 1914,
110

Watercolour on paper on cardboard
15,5 × 15,9/16,3 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation
of Livia Klee

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08

Paul Klee

Tunesische Scizze [Tunisian Sketch], 1914, 212

Watercolour and pencil on paper on cardboard

17,9 × 12,2 cm

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation of Livia Klee



09

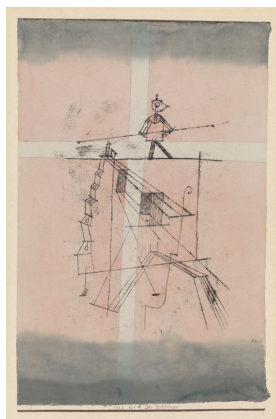
Paul Klee

Ohne Titel (Fabrikanlage) [Untitled (Factory Plant)], 1922

Watercolour and pencil on paper on cardboard

10 × 8,9 cm

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation of Livia Klee



10

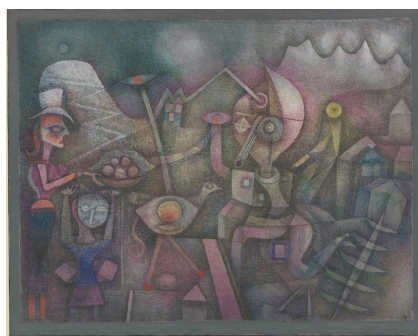
Paul Klee

Seiltänzer [Tightrope Walker], 1923, 138

Lithograph

43,2 × 26,8 cm

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



11

Paul Klee

Karneval im Gebirge [Carnival in the Mountains], 1924, 114

Watercolour on primed paper on cardboard

24 × 31,3 cm

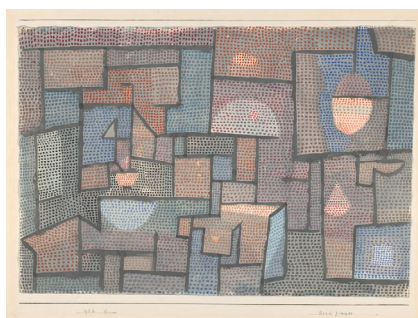
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12
Paul Klee
Fische im Kreis [Fishes in a Circle], 1926, 140
Oil and tempera on primed muslin
on cardboard
42 × 43 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation
of Livia Klee



13
Paul Klee
Nordzimmer [North Room], 1932,
17
Watercolour on paper on cardboard
37 × 55 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



14
Paul Klee
Doppelgesicht [Double face], 1933,
383
Coloured paste and pencil on paper
on cardboard
33 × 21 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation
of Livia Klee



15
Paul Klee
spätes Glühen [Late Glowing], 1934,
29
Pastel on damask on cardboard
26,8 x 32,5/34,3 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, donation
of Livia Klee

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16
Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Rolf Siegenthaler, © Zentrum Paul Klee



17
Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Rolf Siegenthaler, © Zentrum Paul Klee



18
Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Rolf Siegenthaler, © Zentrum Paul Klee



19
Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Rolf Siegenthaler, © Zentrum Paul Klee



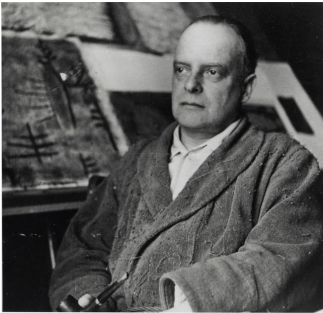
20
Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Rolf Siegenthaler, © Zentrum Paul Klee



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Exhibition view *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*, Zentrum Paul Klee, 2024, photo: Christine Strub, © Zentrum Paul Klee



Paul Klee in his studio, Kistlerweg 6, Bern, April (Easter) 1938, photo: Felix Klee 12,8 x 9 cm, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Donation of the Klee family, © Klee-Nachlassverwaltung, Hinterkappelen



Paul Klee in his studio, Kistlerweg 6, Bern, Autumn 1935, photo: Fee Meisel, 9,6 x 10 cm, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Donation of the Klee family

Biography

1879

Paul Klee was born the son of music teacher Hans Wilhelm Klee (1849–1940) and singer Ida Maria Frick (1855–1921) on 18 December in Münchenbuchsee near Bern.

1898

After finishing his secondary education and wavering between music and painting for a long time, he decides to study art and goes to Munich where he attends Heinrich Knirr's private drawing school.

1899

Klee meets his future wife, the pianist Lily Stumpf (1876–1946).

1900

After five months, he breaks off his studies at the Munich Academy in Franz von Stuck's painting class.

1901

In July, Klee returns to his parents in Bern.

1901/1902

He undertakes a six-month educational trip through Italy with the sculptor Hermann Haller and experiences a creative crisis in view of the art of antiquity and the Renaissance.

1902–1906

He retreats to his parents' house to study on his own and creates his first reverse glass paintings and etchings.

1906

After marrying Lily Stumpf on 15 September in Bern, the couple move to Munich.

1907

On 30 September, their son Felix is born.

1911

Klee meets the artists of the *Blauer Reiter*: August Macke, Gabriele Münter, Wassily Kandinsky, Marianne von Werefkin, Alexej Jawlensky and later Franz Marc.

1912

17 works of Klee are part of the second *Blauer Reiter* exhibition in Munich. In April, he travels to Paris, where he sees Cubist works for the first time and visits Robert and Sonia Delaunay.

1914

In April, Klee travels to Tunisia with August Macke and Louis Moilliet. There, he deepens the impulses towards abstraction and colour design which he received in Paris.

1916

On 11 March, Klee is called up to the army and, after infantry training, performs his military service with the aviation unit in Schleissheim near Munich and in Gersthofen. He is able to continue his artistic work.

1916–1918

Through his exhibitions in the Berlin gallery *Der Sturm*, he becomes a cult figure of young art in Germany.

1920

Hans Goltz, who represented Klee in his gallery, organises a first retrospective of 362 works in Munich. The first Klee monographs are published. In October, Klee is appointed to the Bauhaus in Weimar by Walter Gropius.

1921

On 13 May, Klee moves from Munich to Weimar and starts teaching.

1923

The Berlin National Gallery organises Klee's first museum exhibition in Germany in the Kronprinzen-Palais.

1924

Art dealer Galka Scheyer founds the artist group *Die Blaue Vier* with Wassily Kandinsky, Lyonel Feininger, Alexej Jawlensky and Paul Klee and tries to make the artists known in the U.S.

1925

he Bauhaus moves to Dessau.

Klee takes part in the first surrealist group exhibition *La peinture surréaliste* in Paris together with Max Ernst, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso and other artists.

1926

Klee and his family move to Dessau, where they live in one of the two-family houses built by Gropius for Bauhaus masters with Wassily and Nina Kandinsky.

1928

Klee undertakes a journey through Egypt. The hieroglyphs and the Nile landscape in particular leave their mark on his work.

1929

Several exhibitions are organised to celebrate Klee's 50th birthday, including in Berlin, Dresden and Paris as well as at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

1931

Klee leaves the Bauhaus and takes up a professorship at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art.

1933

Under pressure from the National Socialists, Klee is dismissed from his teaching position. At the end of the year, he leaves Germany with his wife and returns to his hometown of Bern.

1935

Klee shows the first signs of scleroderma.

1936

His poor state of health makes Klee's artistic work much more difficult.

1937

Klee's art is labelled "degenerate" by the National Socialists and 102 of his works are confiscated from German museums. 15 of them are part of the exhibition *Entartete Kunst*.

1939

Despite his poor state of health, Klee's productivity reaches a peak. He creates 1253 works in just one year.

1940

On 29 June, Paul Klee dies in Locarno-Muralto. His application for naturalisation, which had been pending until then, is approved on 5 July.

Current and upcoming exhibitions at the Zentrum Paul Klee

Brasil! Brasil! The Birth of Modernism
7.9.2024–5.1.2025

Kosmos Klee. The Collection

Fokus. Journals of the Avant-Garde
19.10.2024–9.2.2025

Opening hours

Tuesday–Sunday
10:00–17:00

Monday closed

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