



Zentrum Paul Klee
Bern

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

Press kit

Kosmos Klee. The Collection



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 70 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 with some 4,000 works it has one of the largest 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 large size, diversity and fragility of the collection, not all works and highlights from the collection can be shown 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 70 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 violin, 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, and his schoolbooks and letters, scribbled over with drawings.

Unpacking Klee

The short film series *Unpacking Klee* is being shown in the exhibition and the Zentrum Paul Klee's YouTube channel from Saturday, 15 June 2024. 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.

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 oeuvre
7. Studio utensils for the spraying technique
8. Photographs of cats
9. Music
10. Schoolbooks

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.

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.

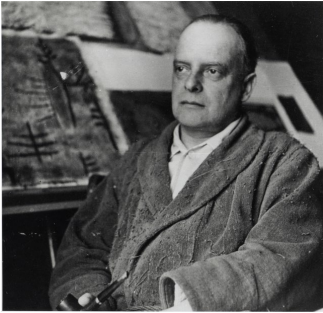
Digitorial® zu Paul Klees Reisen

Experience five of Paul Klee's most important journeys and follow 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 Delaunay, 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.





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.

Curator

Fabienne Eggelhöfer

With the support of

Kanton Bern, Bundesamt für Kultur BAK, Bürgergemeinde Bern

Press images *Kosmos Klee*

Download press images:

zpk.org/press

All copyrights are reserved. The complete caption must be used and the artwork reproduced as illustrated. It is only permitted to reproduce the images in conjunction with coverage of the exhibition *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*.



01

Paul Klee

Ohne Titel (Dorfkirche, Bach, Berge und runde Brücke)
[untitled (Village Church, Stream, Mountain and Arched Bridge)], 1896

Watercolour and pencil on paper
8,3 x 9,3 cm

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



02

Paul Klee

vor den Toren v. Kairuan [Before the Gates of Kairouan], 1914, 216

Watercolour on paper on
cardboard

20,7 x 31,5 cm

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



03

Paul Klee

mit der sinkenden Sonne [With the Sinking Sun], 1919, 247

Watercolour on pred paper on
cardboard

19,6/20 x 26,2 cm

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



04

Paul Klee

Ohne Titel (Frau Tod) [untitled, Miss Death], 1921

Hand puppet

36 cm

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern,
donation Livia Klee

Download press images:

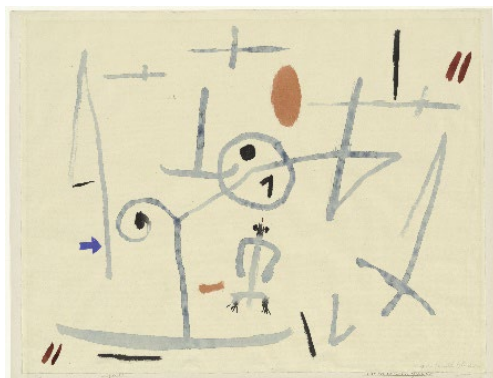
zpk.org/press

All copyrights are reserved. The complete caption must be used and the artwork reproduced as illustrated. It is only permitted to reproduce the images in conjunction with coverage of the exhibition *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*.



05

Paul Klee
Schwungkräfte [Centrifugal Forces], 1929, 267
Watercolour on paper on cardboard
24,5 x 23,5 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



06

Paul Klee
eins der schönsten Gleichnisse [One of the Most Beautiful Parables], 1933, 61
Watercolour on paper on cardboard
48,5 x 62,2 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern,
Museumsstiftung für Kunst der
Burggemeinde Bern



07

Paul Klee
Cunctator, 1938, 61
Coloured paste on paper on cardboard
53,5 x 35 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



08

Paul Klee
Fama, 1939, 502
Oil on canvas; original frame
90 x 120 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern

Download press images:

zpk.org/press

All copyrights are reserved. The complete caption must be used and the artwork reproduced as illustrated. It is only permitted to reproduce the images in conjunction with coverage of the exhibition *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*.



09

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



10

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



11

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



12

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



13

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



14

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

Fokus. Architecture with Klee. From Mies van der Rohe to Lisbeth Sachs
1.6.–13.10.2024

From 1 June to 13 October 2024, in the context of the permanent exhibition *Kosmos Klee*, the Zentrum Paul Klee presents a thematic focus which for the first time explores Paul Klee's influence on the architecture of the 20th century.

'Everywhere I see only architecture, linear rhythms, planar rhythms.'
Paul Klee (1902)

It is well known that Paul Klee influenced music, literature and philosophy in a variety of ways. The fact that the artist also made a lasting impression on architects is the theme of the focus exhibition *Architecture with Klee. From Mies van der Rohe to Lisbeth Sachs*. At the centre are the remarkable traces of Klee that we can see in the work of selected architects such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Carlo Scarpa, Lisbeth Sachs, Lina Bo Bardi, Aldo van Eyck and Aldo Rossi. Designs, sketches, models and photographs are shown next to works by Klee, his art-theoretical drawings and pedagogical sketches. In this way the presentation shows the interdisciplinary interplay between architecture and art: the architecture is viewed from the sophisticated perspective of Klee the Bauhaus teacher, and his abstract and fantastical works are seen from the viewpoint of architects.

One particular area on which the exhibition concentrates is the fascination that Klee exerted on Lisbeth Sachs – one of Switzerland's first independent women architects – and on the internationally successful Italian architect and theorist Aldo Rossi. As early as the 1940s, Sachs was active as a critic and in 1948, on the occasion of the Klee exhibition held by Bern's Paul Klee Foundation in the Kunsthaus Zurich, published a probing review in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, which is still worth reading today. Sachs's preoccupation with Klee bore its first fruits in the design and execution of the art pavilion at the SAFFA (Swiss Exhibition for Women's Work) in Zürich in 1958. Klee's theory of design, *Das bildnerische Denken* was probably a major source of inspiration for the architect. Some ten years later Aldo Rossi, at the time a lecturer at Milan Polytechnic University, quoted Klee in his theoretical writings. Rossi discovered a model for his architecture in Klee's autobiographical works, which is bound up with historical memory while being at the same time constructive and rational. Particular attention is paid in the exhibition to Rossi's now forgotten design for the Klösterliareal in Bern in 1981.



Digital Guide

The exhibition is accompanied by a freely accessible digital guide.

Curators

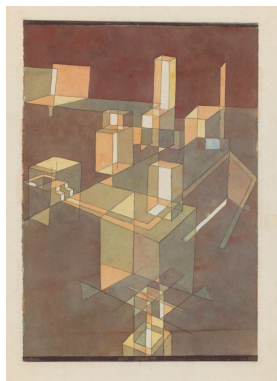
Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Osamu Okuda

Press images Fokus

Download press images:

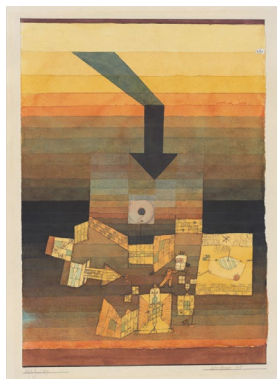
zpk.org/press

All copyrights are reserved. The complete caption must be used and the artwork reproduced as illustrated. It is only permitted to reproduce the images in conjunction with coverage of the exhibition *Kosmos Klee. The Collection*.



01

Paul Klee
italienische Stadt [Italian Town], 1928, 66
Ink and watercolour on paper on cardboard
33 x 23,4 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Private collection,
Switzerland, deposit at the Zentrum Paul
Klee



02

Paul Klee
betroffener Ort [Affected Place], 1922, 109
Ink, pencil and watercolour on paper on
cardboard
30,7 x 23,1 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



03

Paul Klee
Beride (Wasserstadt) [Beride (Watertown)],
1927, 51
Ink on paper on cardboard
16,3/16,7 x 22,1/22,4 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



04

Paul Klee
Verfall einer Architektur [Dilapidation of an
Architecture], 1938, 483
Ink on paper on cardboard
29,7 x 20,9 cm
Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern



05

Second Swiss Exhibition for Women's Work
SAFFA 1958, art pavillon, photo: Fred
Waldvogel, Gosteli Stiftung, Archiv,
Worblaufen, AGoF 299-194: 22. Ausstellung
GSMBK, Saffa 1958 Zürich



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

Press office

+41 31 328 09 93

press@zpk.org

ZENTRUM PAUL KLEE

Monument im Fruchtländ 3, 3006 Bern

zpk.org