



Paul Klee

Paul Klee

*His Life and Work in
Documents, selected from
posthumous writings
and unpublished letters*

*With 121 reproductions of
paintings, drawings, photographs
and other documents*

by Felix Klee

*translated from the German
by Richard and Clara Winston*

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Foreword

As Paul Klee's only son I was asked, some time ago, to do a book about my father. For many years art historians have been producing excellent studies of Paul Klee as painter. The sole claim I can make for my own book is that it views Paul Klee from the purely private and personal angle. However, I consider that the best testimony of all stems directly from my father, and therefore I quote him as often as possible. My feeling is that the picture of Paul Klee as man and artist comes best to life through his own utterances.

The consensus of opinion is, I think, that Klee's contribution to graphic art is valid, although there may be some disagreement on this score. Even during my father's lifetime many assigned him a high place in the development of art in the twentieth century, while others called him a trickster or a schizophrenic, degenerate, crazy, wild and perverse. I myself would prefer to attribute no excessive importance to all this criticism. After all, I knew my father well enough from my earliest childhood to be aware of how healthy and normal he was in body and soul, and how consistently he pursued his artistic and human goals.

In 1956, I edited his *Diaries*—those remarkable records of his stages on the way to the emergence of his true personality—and I found this assumption of mine confirmed beyond the shadow of a doubt. Those diaries give a comprehensive picture of my father's many-sided interests, artistic and human: they express his views on painting, sculpture, drawing, poetry, architecture, theater, his dealings with other persons, and above all music. This last remained a key aspect of his life. My father was an excellent violinist, a student of Meister Jahn in Bern, and he used to take refuge in music until very late in life.

The attentive reader of the diaries will have become aware that Switzerland, and the city of Bern in particular, with all its memories of his parental home, schooldays and friends, was especially dear to him. He loved Bern's cozy, cordial atmosphere. After the long years of schooling in his native land the young man was drawn to foreign parts: to Paris, Italy, and above all to Munich, which in those days had so vital an artistic life. All these way stations provided Klee with new and crucial impressions. Yet Klee remained Swiss through and through. He thought like a Swiss and spoke Swiss dialect. Since his father was German and his mother a native of Basel, his citizenship was officially German. But basically he had little affinity to things German. In appearance, moreover, he looked far more like a native of southern France than a German.

Nevertheless, later in life a good many positive and negative factors linked him to his official country: marriage to a Munich girl in 1906; his life in the

Bavarian metropolis during the highly significant phase of his career up to 1914; his compulsory participation in the First World War as a German soldier; the magnificent flowering of his artistic powers after 1918; the general recognition of his art, which was confirmed in 1920 by an invitation to work at the newly founded Bauhaus in Weimar; his professorship at the Bauhaus in Dessau in 1925; the call to the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf in 1930. In December, 1933, ten months after the Nazis took power, he returned to Bern. By then his place of residence was more or less a side issue, but it was only natural that he should move to Bern, his starting point. Departure from Germany was not easy for Klee, and yet he adapted swiftly; he quickly came to feel at home in Switzerland. The last seven years of his life were so important in terms of his work that we must be especially thankful to those friends and patrons who had made the transition as tolerable as possible for him. Unfortunately, the authorities were in no great hurry to grant him the Swiss citizenship he so desired. Paul Klee died still a German—in the sixty-first year of his life, at a sanatorium in Locarno-Muralto, on June 29, 1940.

FELIX KLEE

PART ONE: *The Life*

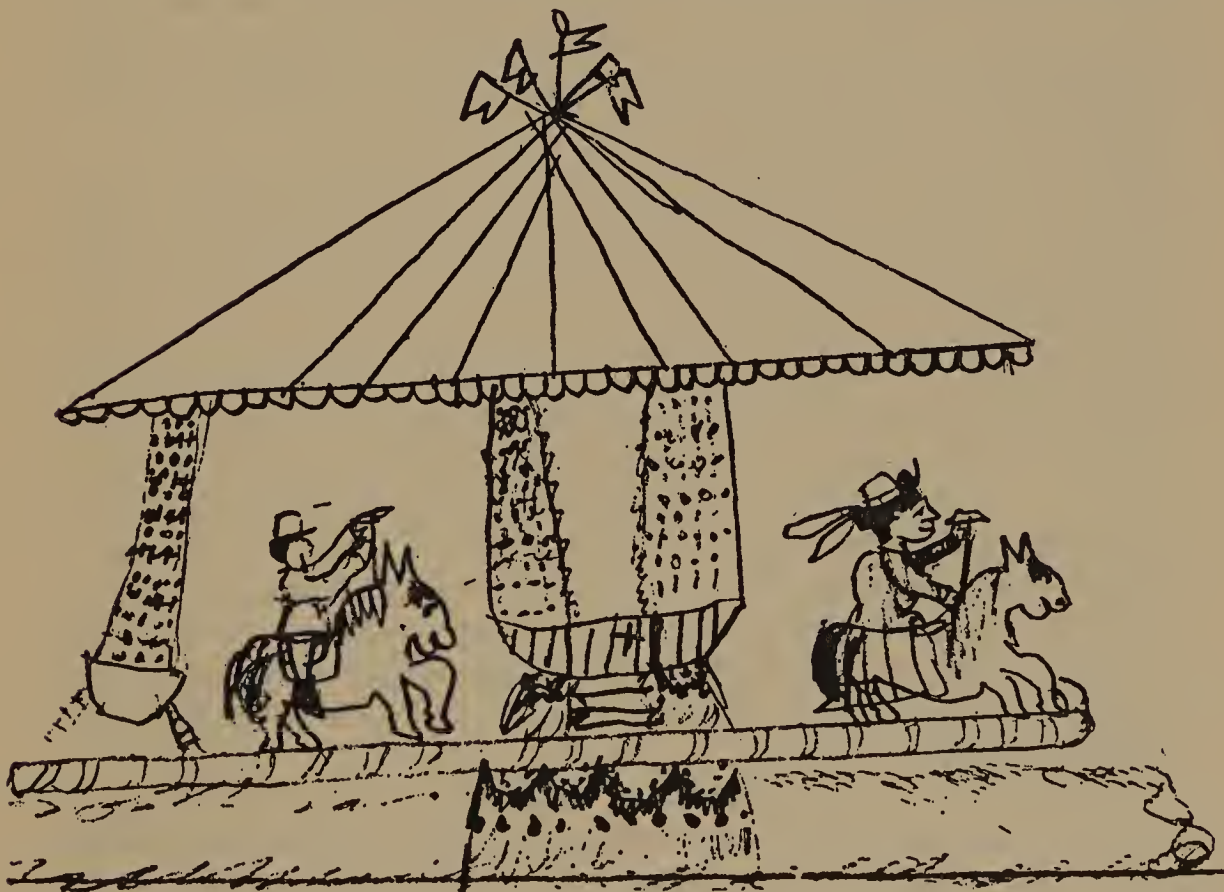
I. Klee's Own Autobiographical Jottings: 1879-1918

Before I set forth my own recollections, here are some autobiographical jottings by my father, which I recently found in an old notebook of his. This terse account has not yet been published and provides a graceful counterpart to the already published diaries (Paul Klee, *Tagebücher*, Verlag Dumont-Schauberg, 1956).

I was born in the last month of the year 1879. My birthplace was in the vicinity of Bern. My father is by profession a music teacher, by disposition primarily a critic and musicologist. He differs from the usual run of musician in the breadth of his intellectual interests. My mother has also had musical training. So I can legitimately say I come from a musical milieu.

As far as my artistic bent goes, there is a legendary great-uncle in my mother's

Pencil drawing by Paul Klee at the age of ten, 1889.



family who is supposed to have been a successful portrait painter in London, but the family soon lost all trace of him. My maternal grandmother drew, painted and embroidered as did every woman of good family in the Biedermeier period: flowers and suchlike pretty things. When I was a very small child, she introduced me to the pleasures of drawing and coloring.

My father comes from Thuringia; my mother is half French and half Swiss. Her French descent is a matter not completely clarified; that side of her family may be from southern France.

My first childhood drawings were highly imaginative illustration. No thought of any model in nature. Flowers, animals, churches, watering cans, horses, wagons, sleds and garden pavilions were recurrent themes. One source of inspiration was sheets of pictures with French verses. Azor et Mimi and Cadet Roussel are a pair that still lodge in my memory. After my grandmother's death, when I was five years old, the artist in me was orphaned; in compensation, my musical training began. The city and country were at a very low level as far as art was concerned; things were somewhat better in the sphere of music.

I had an excellent violin teacher, a highly cultivated concertmaster who had switched from theology to music, moved in Burckhardt's circle and was also a lover of graphic art. He had Knackfuss monographs about the house—especially on Raphael and Leonardo, of course. The new method of reproduction was what made the greatest impression upon me.

Böcklin, who was most highly thought of in Switzerland in those days, was closer to me, and now and then some picture in a Reading Circle journal; otherwise I preferred the trash in the magazines my mother took for light entertainment.

The look of Bern, and even more the look of Fribourg, near which our family spent several summers, were probably more significant impressions; and then the Lake of Thun and the Alps, Sankt Beatenberg and its soaring crest. Later on, the immediate vicinity of Bern with the gray, fantastic course of the Aare river.

I gradually fell into the way of drawing this landscape, without attempting to put even a grain of deeper meaning into my sketches. A certain skill in the use of sharp pencils and pens, and a certain taste in choosing subjects, won me much praise from my family and friends. In addition I was making good progress on the violin, so that I could soon play Mozart and Bach and was permitted to take part in the municipal orchestra's subscription concerts and performances of oratorios. They played music as far as Brahms. Wagner and post-Wagnerian composers were somewhat suspect.

Aside from these satisfying occupations, I had to attend the Gymnasium. Year by year I became more and more discontented with my work there, and I barely managed to scrape through and pass the final examination.

What next? I was somewhat attracted to literature, but it did not strike me as a proper profession. Composing did not tempt me, for it seemed to me that the great days of music were over. I was not particularly interested in becoming a violinist; I could see that my teacher himself was not happy in his art.

But graphic art did have something tempting about it, although the attraction at first was less in the art itself than in the prospect of being out in the world, someplace where things happened in a bigger, livelier, more interesting way. It was not until much later on that I perceived the instinctive rightness of this choice.

In October, 1898, therefore, at the age of eighteen, I went to Munich. One of my first acts was to go to the Academy, and ask Löffz about the conditions for admission. He referred me to Knirr, who ran an excellent school where we learned to draw from models. Soon I was considered one of Knirr's best pupils, and since the free life, the international comradeships and the unusually good musical performances appealed to me, I thoroughly enjoyed my life in Munich. I remained with Knirr for a second year, but then I had to enter the Academy, for my parents would have felt that I was not studying with sufficient seriousness. It seemed a bit irresponsible for me to be attending a nongovernmental school. Stuck's class was very popular with talented youngsters and had the reputation of being stimulating. I therefore enrolled in it in the fall.

In Knirr's classes I had learned to draw nudes and heads in an aesthetic manner. Then I had attempted so-called compositions supposed to illustrate various kinds of epigrammatic ideas. These pictures were neither competent nor ambitious.

Stuck was more academic than Knirr; he insisted on greater knowledge of the human body. That would not have been too bad as far as learning drawing was concerned, but he was no good as a teacher of painting, for he never said a thing about color. For a time I wanted to try my hand at sculpture. I can dimly recollect Kandinski and Weingerber, who were fellow students of mine. Weingerber was a kind of model pupil: Kandinski was quiet and mixed the colors on his palette with the greatest diligence and, so it seemed to me, with a kind of studiousness, peering very closely at what he was doing.

I stood it for only a few weeks, because I was perplexed and could not force myself to paint and yet felt it was not right to confine myself to drawing in a painting class. I felt the tug of the old place, and pretty soon I had returned to my friends at Knirr's, where I spent the rest of the third year. I was planning to work under Rümman for the summer semester; but when he demanded a sample of my work in color, I dropped out of his class. I felt that my drawings had been sufficient proof of my competence, and that he should have seen that. The major result of all this: a desire for marriage. Now the greater part of the money set aside for my education had been consumed and it was imperative that I make up

7. Aufg. Auf. In einem Kreis eine Ellipse e zu zeichnen, die durch den Punkt A auf dem Kreisbogen verläuft. Die Tangente an A ist t . Die Tangente an A_1 ist t_1 . Die Tangente an A_2 ist t_2 . Die Tangente an A_3 ist t_3 . Die Tangente an A_4 ist t_4 . Die Tangente an A_5 ist t_5 . Die Tangente an A_6 ist t_6 . Die Tangente an A_7 ist t_7 . Die Tangente an A_8 ist t_8 . Die Tangente an A_9 ist t_9 . Die Tangente an A_{10} ist t_{10} . Die Tangente an A_{11} ist t_{11} . Die Tangente an A_{12} ist t_{12} . Die Tangente an A_{13} ist t_{13} . Die Tangente an A_{14} ist t_{14} . Die Tangente an A_{15} ist t_{15} . Die Tangente an A_{16} ist t_{16} . Die Tangente an A_{17} ist t_{17} . Die Tangente an A_{18} ist t_{18} . Die Tangente an A_{19} ist t_{19} . Die Tangente an A_{20} ist t_{20} . Die Tangente an A_{21} ist t_{21} . Die Tangente an A_{22} ist t_{22} . Die Tangente an A_{23} ist t_{23} . Die Tangente an A_{24} ist t_{24} . Die Tangente an A_{25} ist t_{25} . Die Tangente an A_{26} ist t_{26} . Die Tangente an A_{27} ist t_{27} . Die Tangente an A_{28} ist t_{28} . Die Tangente an A_{29} ist t_{29} . Die Tangente an A_{30} ist t_{30} . Die Tangente an A_{31} ist t_{31} . Die Tangente an A_{32} ist t_{32} . Die Tangente an A_{33} ist t_{33} . Die Tangente an A_{34} ist t_{34} . Die Tangente an A_{35} ist t_{35} . Die Tangente an A_{36} ist t_{36} . Die Tangente an A_{37} ist t_{37} . Die Tangente an A_{38} ist t_{38} . Die Tangente an A_{39} ist t_{39} . Die Tangente an A_{40} ist t_{40} . Die Tangente an A_{41} ist t_{41} . Die Tangente an A_{42} ist t_{42} . Die Tangente an A_{43} ist t_{43} . Die Tangente an A_{44} ist t_{44} . Die Tangente an A_{45} ist t_{45} . Die Tangente an A_{46} ist t_{46} . Die Tangente an A_{47} ist t_{47} . Die Tangente an A_{48} ist t_{48} . Die Tangente an A_{49} ist t_{49} . Die Tangente an A_{50} ist t_{50} . Die Tangente an A_{51} ist t_{51} . Die Tangente an A_{52} ist t_{52} . Die Tangente an A_{53} ist t_{53} . Die Tangente an A_{54} ist t_{54} . Die Tangente an A_{55} ist t_{55} . Die Tangente an A_{56} ist t_{56} . Die Tangente an A_{57} ist t_{57} . Die Tangente an A_{58} ist t_{58} . Die Tangente an A_{59} ist t_{59} . Die Tangente an A_{60} ist t_{60} . Die Tangente an A_{61} ist t_{61} . Die Tangente an A_{62} ist t_{62} . Die Tangente an A_{63} ist t_{63} . Die Tangente an A_{64} ist t_{64} . Die Tangente an A_{65} ist t_{65} . Die Tangente an A_{66} ist t_{66} . Die Tangente an A_{67} ist t_{67} . Die Tangente an A_{68} ist t_{68} . Die Tangente an A_{69} ist t_{69} . Die Tangente an A_{70} ist t_{70} . Die Tangente an A_{71} ist t_{71} . Die Tangente an A_{72} ist t_{72} . Die Tangente an A_{73} ist t_{73} . Die Tangente an A_{74} ist t_{74} . Die Tangente an A_{75} ist t_{75} . Die Tangente an A_{76} ist t_{76} . Die Tangente an A_{77} ist t_{77} . Die Tangente an A_{78} ist t_{78} . Die Tangente an A_{79} ist t_{79} . Die Tangente an A_{80} ist t_{80} . Die Tangente an A_{81} ist t_{81} . Die Tangente an A_{82} ist t_{82} . Die Tangente an A_{83} ist t_{83} . Die Tangente an A_{84} ist t_{84} . Die Tangente an A_{85} ist t_{85} . Die Tangente an A_{86} ist t_{86} . Die Tangente an A_{87} ist t_{87} . Die Tangente an A_{88} ist t_{88} . Die Tangente an A_{89} ist t_{89} . Die Tangente an A_{90} ist t_{90} . Die Tangente an A_{91} ist t_{91} . Die Tangente an A_{92} ist t_{92} . Die Tangente an A_{93} ist t_{93} . Die Tangente an A_{94} ist t_{94} . Die Tangente an A_{95} ist t_{95} . Die Tangente an A_{96} ist t_{96} . Die Tangente an A_{97} ist t_{97} . Die Tangente an A_{98} ist t_{98} . Die Tangente an A_{99} ist t_{99} . Die Tangente an A_{100} ist t_{100} .

1. Lösung. mit Hilfe der Tangentenpunkte $T_1, T_2, T_3, T_4, T_5, T_6, T_7, T_8, T_9, T_{10}, T_{11}, T_{12}, T_{13}, T_{14}, T_{15}, T_{16}, T_{17}, T_{18}, T_{19}, T_{20}, T_{21}, T_{22}, T_{23}, T_{24}, T_{25}, T_{26}, T_{27}, T_{28}, T_{29}, T_{30}, T_{31}, T_{32}, T_{33}, T_{34}, T_{35}, T_{36}, T_{37}, T_{38}, T_{39}, T_{40}, T_{41}, T_{42}, T_{43}, T_{44}, T_{45}, T_{46}, T_{47}, T_{48}, T_{49}, T_{50}, T_{51}, T_{52}, T_{53}, T_{54}, T_{55}, T_{56}, T_{57}, T_{58}, T_{59}, T_{60}, T_{61}, T_{62}, T_{63}, T_{64}, T_{65}, T_{66}, T_{67}, T_{68}, T_{69}, T_{70}, T_{71}, T_{72}, T_{73}, T_{74}, T_{75}, T_{76}, T_{77}, T_{78}, T_{79}, T_{80}, T_{81}, T_{82}, T_{83}, T_{84}, T_{85}, T_{86}, T_{87}, T_{88}, T_{89}, T_{90}, T_{91}, T_{92}, T_{93}, T_{94}, T_{95}, T_{96}, T_{97}, T_{98}, T_{99}, T_{100}$.

2. Lösung. K_1 Mittelpunkt $r = AF_2$
 K_2 " " " " $r = 2a$

for lost time. In life if not in art I considered that my engagement to my future wife had given me solid ground underfoot.

In the winter of 1901-2, I was to take a trip to Italy. On October 22, I set out with my friend Haller for Milan, then Genoa, by ship to Leghorn, from there to Pisa, and by express train to Rome, which we reached on October 27. My strongest impression was of Genoa as a city and port, and that impression has remained. The long, tedious epic of Rome could not compare with the magnificent dramatic quality of Genoa. In Rome I was first affected by the Michelangelos of the Sistine Chapel; later, in November, I was drawn more to the early Christian art. I was not yet ripe for the pure landscape of the Campagna, but found the suburban streets very charming. Naples' Riviera, which I visited in the spring, particularly appealed to me. In San Pietro I was moved by the old Petrus, but not by the Michelangelo Pietà. Baroque alarmed me. In Florence I discovered the Gothic, and was carried away by it. The outcome was Gothic-classic—traces of this persist in my etchings of 1903-6. I became a modest apprentice.

In the Vatican picture gallery I was struck above all—coloristically, too!—by Mantegna's Pietà, then by Leonardo's unfinished Jerome. Pursued Prussian history on the Palatine. Outwardly somewhat infected by Burckhardt's cicerone—but this was only superficial. Drew a nude in the German Artists' Club; treated the form more thoroughly, though my study had some of the mannerism of marble statuary. Was particularly taken with the basilica of Santa Sabina. Drank vermouth to keep warm—in lieu of a stove.

Only gradually learned to enjoy the gracious aspect of the people. Great solitude of the twilight hours. Enjoyment of good food. The South! The melody of Italian folksongs—going back to the Arabic—specially moving to me, products of an alien world, as—later—the cathedral of Amalfi. Autosuggestion with the Belvedere Apollo and the Cnidian Aphrodite, but not with the Laocoön. Relations to ladies with photos of the Muses—ethical and erotic.

Plan to learn anatomy thoroughly in Bern—like a physician. If I know that, "I can do anything."

Bern; Réjane brought with her Parisian air and stirred timorous longings for Paris. Aristophanes.

1902

Drawing from life in the German Artists' Club's Hall of Nudes. Palatine history. Pessimism. Xenophon. Otéro. Opera. The nudes. Unpainterly notes on form. In my work color only decorates the plastic impression. February 26: outing to Porto d'Anzio. Landscape. Sadness of the epigones. Satire. Politeama daub; Bohème, Tosca good. Zola, Rome, Tacitus. March 23: Naples. The refreshing quality of this city because nature and beauty of site are in the foreground. Much more of the present than Rome: one isn't always being reminded of decadence. On the other hand, it does not seem a modern city, as Genoa does, because work is not so obviously the main thing here. Once more I was something altogether innocuous: a tourist. Wandered about happily. Went to see Pompeii, the bronzes in the Museo Nazionale, Pompeian miniatures and furnishings; Posilipo, the islands, aquarium; even a short walking tour, Swiss style, to Sorrento and Amalfi and over the mountains to Gragnano, in the course of which a tumble down a waterfall turned out to be great fun. In Amalfi first conscious Oriental impressions—the cathedral. My departure from Rome was this time somewhat more harmonious. The aristocratic elegance and reticent coloring of the landscape of the Villa Hadriana near Tivoli made a deep, conscious impression upon me, so that my sense of color seemed secure again, although rather by way of capital put by for the future.

Summing up of Italy. Man is—through his sense of history—enriched and more voluminous. The artist is timid and typically skeptical: "instead of going into myself,

seeing what comes out." In the end, on top of everything else in Rome I also saw an exhibit of modern works, especially drawings of nudes by Rodin. I called them caricatures of nudes, for the modern approach was that startling. In any case the effect was very powerful. Had thoughts of Paris. Florence more a pleasure sojourn, friendships and fun in the atmosphere of beautiful art. No ethical influences. Also a bit of the atmosphere of Munich, through an old classmate I met there.

Summer, 1902

Living with my parents in Bern and by the Lake of Thun for a number of years. My profession, in terms of my state of mind at the time, that is: painting without the foundation of a thoroughly cultivated humanness, without a live, positive philosophy, was only partly satisfactory. Some good spirit led me on beyond such narrowness to the essential questions of humanity, although at the time this was still unconscious. "Expand the horizon of thought to the point of sensing the operation of law, thereby to attain simplification."

The concept of impressionism, hitherto remote from me, became less so, as a result of my efforts to achieve totality. Began to see the meaning of satire: satire out of reverence for what is human, war upon those who would degrade men. Spiritualization of landscape, mingling of its psyche with human sensibility. Reflections on the value of the individual. Beginnings of a fresh approach to art, along with dim intimations that any ascent I might make would be dependent upon philosophy and human growth. Modest exercises in formal ideas. For example, projection of the third dimension upon the plane. Certain satisfaction in this. Artistic perspective. Attempt at the "union of the poetic and the graphic," accompanied by regret that initially affirmative poetic feeling had passed over into satire. Uncertainty in command of form—always of the nude—imperatively calls for study of anatomy.

Idea of advancing beyond Rome—antiquity—for clarification:

Complex I Objective vision, physical constitution.

Bodily construction. The here-and-now—Barth.

Complex II Subjective vision, spiritual constitution.

Liquefaction of the constructive element.

Soul—hereafter.

to II a) Christianity.

b) Music as new main branch of Complex II.

Flower studies. Trying to treat a phenomenon of nature for lack of better graphic creation.

Technical experiment, making an etching on glass for photographic reproduction. The black line.

Again guest member of the municipal orchestra. Begun anatomy studies from cadaver every morning. Occasional trips with the orchestra to Neuchâtel, Burgdorf, Olten. Attending the evening life class at the Museum of Arts and Crafts: studies of form in the Hodler manner—stimulated by Boss, the pupil of Hodler—not aesthetic. Experiments in painting technique. Subject not the main thing.

Ideas for pictures:

a) A world pours out a repulsive discharge—revulsion.

b) Dicers playing for a woman.

c) Pair of lovers at daybreak: the woman flees with the night.

Color studies from nature. Idea for a picture—after the meeting, the one turning around again; clever family, the great-grandfather positive, the grandfather still so, the father too stern, the youth comical, the child precocious, disagreeable.

Antithesis to unaesthetic population.

Motif for a picture: Mama and Papa weeping, child dead, streaked with green. The color revealing a certain knowledge of natural processes. Preparation for etching—a sort of rest from the frustrations of painting—by looking for suitable subjects for drawing. Life studies, together with Louis Moilliet, of a thirteen-year-old boy. Success in etching foreshadowed in a first version, later dropped, of the motif Woman and Animal, with an explanation for blockheads.

My first usable opus, the etching *Virgin in the Tree*, July, 1903. My spirits rise somewhat. August, 1903. First forerunner of the *Comedian*. Unsuccessful etching: *Philosophes Transport God to the Museum*. Also a little *scherzo*: *A Woman, Sowing Weeds*. Read much *Aristophanes*. The *Two Men*—etching—done in two bouts. Reading *Hebbel*, theoretical writings. Reading *Multatuli* [E. D. Dekker]. *Woman and Animal*—definitive version—November, 1903. Praise of architecture as school of the plastic arts. The concept of organism. "Nature" as a school; it is a delicately meshed organism, organisms fitted into organisms, so that the part constantly becomes the mother of new parts. To recognize this in the very smallest realms is a fine thing in itself.

1904

The *Comedian* in copper. Thinking back: my ambition to do something in the graphic field dates back to my engagement in 1900. Apprenticeship in Rome a kind of humiliation; serious studies of form without any valid production. Gradually freer activity; activation of the innate. New nature studies alongside—life studies with Moilliet, and anatomy. In July, 1903, first production, beginner's work. On the track of the inexorable law within me. *Strindberg*, eleven one-act plays. Occupied with autobiography. *Gogol*. *Hebbel's Nibelungen*.

Visit of Haller. Small etching: *Feminine Grace*. *Byron*: [Childe] Harold. *Outings*

to Geneva (Corot) and Zurich with my fiancée. October 15-25, in Munich. Saw Beardsley and Blake for the first time. Goya: Desastros! Woman and Animal, finally. The Monarchist, the new Perseus. November-December: learning viola. Raimund: The Spendthrift.

1905

An important work of art is engendered after one has had to abandon a still more important one. Commentary on Perseus. The Hero with the Wing, etching, with commentary. Sketch of the next opus, Threatening Head, with the comment that it will probably be my last in the "strict style." Plan: Spain—expressing a certain longing for freer representation in the spirit of Goya. All inner conflicts of life spiritualized in the bud. No vigorous, vital art will emerge from that. "I must reach the point of being alone and naked in productive studies." I have a premonition of such a new period. If it does not come, then I no longer have anything new to say. But I've burned all my bridges behind me. Reading Wedekind. Gogol quotations: ". . . that there is a laughter which . . ." Pounced on them as related to the Comedian. Two more quotations along these lines—popularistic, after Heine. That one builds bridges which are afterward superfluous. Threatening Head:

- a) through pain to negation;
- b) resignation as a ghost.

Feeling very remote ever since Munich. But too intellectual and therefore too narrow. Verging on impressionism in thought. Preserving the honor of negation. A few more words on the Comedian. Considerations on Woman and Animal—various commentaries. Barriers between myself and my friend the doctor—purely intellectual in nature. Objections to Wedekind; Hidallah. Occupied with a scientific problem in optics. Reflections on good and evil. Graphic work, white against black background. See this as the opening of a new era. Recognizing the one-sidedness of graphic art, the limitation of black medium. Hope of increasing production. Let there be light—white Genesis on black stasis.

From music, recognition of a nonemotional theme of suffering. Later, Beethoven as educator. My ego as organic-dramatic ensemble. Giving much thought to the concept of organism. Beginning to extract conclusions from music which are relevant to art.

June, 1905. First stay in Paris with Moilliet and Dr. Bloesch, chiefly affected by impressionism, but also by the rococo. Impressionistic ball—bal de nuit. Big Whistler show. Bois de Boulogne, Saint-Cloud, back on the Seine. Italian opera. A blond. Rodin, Manet, Monet, Velázquez, Goya. Outer boulevards. Watteau. Question of Chardin. Tartuffe at the Comédie—basis for many a Lautrec. Gluck's Armide twice. Bullier. Rembrandt in old age. Sacré-Coeur, Montmartre, Versailles. Carrière

more than a textbook example of tonal painting. Tintoretto, Veronese, Leonardo as noncoloristic picturesque artist—tonality. Cold, cool, lukewarm, mixed, warm; impressionism, which substitutes the whole human feeling for the half-objective feeling.

Recognition that a nonpictorial idea in itself is not yet achievement of pure art. Doubting whether I have it in me. Struggle for freer form of expression. Attempt with aquatints—the medium no longer exists. An example pointing up the essential difference between old and impressionist art.

Lady with Fig-leaf on Brow.

Insight: The new art does not form objects but feelings for objects and with objects. The end of the Old Masters' school. The artist does not reproduce nature in herself, but rather the law of nature. Growth of self-confidence—new area. Already alienated from the first etchings, without having yet proved the New by action. Struggles for the new act.

End of October, 1905, in Munich, became acquainted with Rops' graphic work. New creative condition. N.B.: glass paintings. Art overcomes ugliness without evading it. I have never illustrated a literary motif, but have always made pictorial forms and only later been particularly pleased if a literary and a pictorial idea should by chance coincide.

1906

Angry thoughts about the artistic dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its corrupting influence—manufacture of kitsch.

Dreaming of marriage, now and then, as a stilling of longing.

Glass paintings. I thought I had come into the clear in art when for the first time I was able to apply an abstract style to nature. Small landscape on glass. Felt secured by nature. The time of major struggle past. Felt expansive enough to enter into life anew. Decision to marry—in the later summer, and to move to Munich. Once the inner self had achieved maturity, the outer life must seek corresponding form; not to do so would be to suffer shipwreck.

Concert trip to Basel, to the Joachim Quartet. Saw the French there: Rodin, Renoir, Monet, Degas. Further experiments with the technique of painting on glass—white ground. It is probably characteristic of my style.

Standing between my etchings and impressionism. Occasional visits to Thun. Coloristic sensation, reflections of the sunset in a glass veranda.

My marriage took place in September, in Bern. In October we moved to Munich. Work: a portrait for Bern; I had already made a childhood portrait in Bern. Show

of the ten etchings at Wachendörfer's in Frankfurt am Main. Failure—in Munich too. Completely ignored by the critics in Munich.

1907

Manet show at Heinemann's: Absinthe Drinker. Monet: The Boulevard. Exercises in abstraction lead to sense of confinement and discord. Sent Karl Scheffler my glass paintings, among other things. Negative result. He replied that I had a lot of talent, but tended to bungle things. The spring Secession rejected the glass paintings. Intention to paint a third portrait—on glass—came to nothing. I would have liked to have shown it in the summer. Reading Wedekind's Spring's Awakening.

Dr. Geheep of Simplizissimus had been told about me. Found nothing in my work they could use; they've often had their troubles with Pascin, he told me. Urged me to adjust to the magazine. I felt the psychological impossibility of that, and had not the slightest intention of doing so. Schmoll and Eisenwerth wanted to bring me in as a teacher at the Debschitz school. Debschitz could not make up his mind.

Met Albert Welti. Summer holiday in Bern. Plein-air drawing on rather large scale with charcoal, tinting in certain bits. A week in Leissigen on the Lake of Thun with my pregnant wife. Back in Munich. Sonderegger is settling down there. Through him I became acquainted with Ensor, and also acquired a more intimate feeling about Daumier.

Birth of my son—November, 1907.

Daumier as a painter! Balzac: Contes drolatiques. Poe: short stories.

1908

The beginning of the year pretty trying, but I gradually felt able to cope with things. Van Gogh's letters; my results compared with the result of years of struggling in the presence of nature. Philosophizing—a kind of expressionistic blind alley—a sharp light thrown upon a good many of my works of 1907. By way of cure resolve to go back to direct work from nature. I Long for the Cry of the Bird . . . As contrast to that considered illustration, stimulated by Balzac's Contes drolatiques. My turning away from philosophizing partly due to reading Meier-Graefe and Scheffler. But the seed for it was already there. Recognized as a mistake: to consciously work away at my own personality. This already exists, I concluded, and nothing special has to be done about it. To See and Love a Flower Bed from God's Garden.

View from Kitchen Balcony into Hohenzollernstrasse, black and white, on glass. Principal document of my liberation from narrowness. Certain admiration for Bonnard, less for Vuillard and Vallotton. Two Van Gogh shows at Brack's and Zimmermann's on Maximilianstrasse. Recognized the elements of genius, but with a certain shudder at the pathological quality.



Aus Rothenburg an der Tauber.

Rothenburg on the Tauber, Pen drawing, 1896.

Method of work:

1. Strictly from nature, ultimately perhaps with mechanical means.
2. Turn the thing upside down and stress certain lines as feeling directs.
3. Turn around and finish.

Once more attempts at painting in oils. Preservation of line in the picture. Telescope studies—in order to abstract from the actual perspective and yet not slip into frivolity.

Reduction: light as object of art. The anatomy of the picture. The line as pictorial element.

Composition: To create a harmony out of disharmonious details.

1909

The note of painful embarrassment in my artistic development has disappeared; it becomes a kind of voluptuous pleasure to climb step by step. A good picture gives the effect of being incomplete until the very last stroke.

Cézanne at the Secession; the greatest event in painting up to that time. Placed him above Van Gogh—he also struck me as more wholesome and more important to myself at the time. Proposition: primitivity out of capacity for reduction. What I learned from his pictures: expression using spots as factors in the chord of color. No local color. Anticipating the Delaunay principle. Between Seurat and Delaunay, neither of whom I knew.

Thought about illustrating *Candide*; perhaps also, of secondary importance, Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*. Thirty years old.

1910

Morgenstern: humorous poems, significant. Painterly nature studies using the magnifying glass. Light—sun. Draftsmanlike painting. Isolation of the pictorial elements. Coloristic type. Tonal type. Organic richness is not duplication. Establishment of the natural tone values with squinting eye. The hairline as graphic element. Avoidance of accumulation of masses which give a falsified pictorial effect. The tone is easy to produce, with dabs of the brush. The picture can unite both, by the use of the thick and the thin brush simultaneously.

1911

Distortion of correct perspective in a drawing by optical means. Graphic-calligraphic sheets, both light and dark values represented with graphic-black symbols. Begun *Candide* illustrations. Matisse!

Through Moilliet I met Macke, Kandinski and Marc and moved closer to their direction. The wider and more international viewpoints appealed to me. Yavlenski and Baroness Verevkin.

1912

Trip to Paris. Met Le Fauconnier and Delaunay personally. In the Uhde Collection the Rousseaus, Braques and Picassos. Became connected with the Modern League in Switzerland and took part in show in Zurich. Arp. Show for the Gereon Club in Cologne and for Walden. Walden is picking drawings for his magazine. Marc is taking the Candide to the publisher Piper. Rejected. Walden is hanging futurists at Thannhauser's.

1913

Arp is trying to help with the Candide and brings the illustrations to the attention of Flake, who is about to enter the publishing house Verlag der Weissen Bücher. The inner struggle in my art is abating.

1914

Mitrinovic is lecturing on Kandinski. Dr. Fritz Bürger is taking an interest. Piper is giving books for drawings. Establishment of the New Secession. Second group show at Thannhauser's arranged by Marc.

Trip through southern France to Tunis and Kairouan, with Moilliet and Macke. Back through Italy. Coloristic stimulus.

1915

Theodor Däubler, Rilke, Hermann Probst.

1916

March 4: Marc killed in action. On March 11, I was conscripted into the army and sent to Landshut. July 20, transferred to Munich. Strenuous marches and exercises. Physical weakness. End of August, transferred to Schleissheim. Set to work at the factory there—painting aircraft. Later a kindhearted sergeant took pity upon me and assigned me to various transport trips to Cologne, Belgium, northern France, Cambrai, Saint-Quentin, then to the North Sea coast. That damaged my good relations with my fellow workers. Often, too, I had to do service with Troop II—loading.

1917

Transferred to Gersthofen near Augsburg on January 17. At first nothing there but a dreary field with a few wooden barracks. All of us set to work on construction in the bitter cold. Soon, however, intellectuals needed, and I am sent to the quartermaster's department for training as a paymaster. Here I gain the confidence of a capable superior and feel relatively good. There is plenty of work, which makes

the long hours pass easily. And I am able to resume my own work with something like regularity. The meadows along the Lech make a charming landscape.

1918

December, 1918, furloughed until discharge.

Discharge comes through in February, 1919. I am now devoting myself with more leisure, and on a broader basis, to painting, and am developing small oils. My work probably lacks a passionate kind of humanity. I do not love animals and other creatures with an earthly heartiness. I neither stoop to them nor raise them to me. Rather, I first surrender myself to the whole and then feel that I stand upon a fraternal footing with all creatures of earth.

The idea of the cosmos displaces that of earthliness. Love is remote and religious. Everything Faustian is alien to me. I take for my start a distant, original point of creation where I assume formulas for man, animal, plant, rock and the elements, for all moving forces simultaneously. A thousand questions fade away as if they had been solved. Neither doctrines nor false doctrines exist any longer. The possibilities are infinite; all I have is my faith in them.

Does warmth emanate from me? Cold? In that realm, beyond the white-hot glow, no such question arises. And because few people attain that point, few are moved by my work.

No sensuousness, no matter how noble it is, can ever form a bridge to the multitude. In my work, man is not a species, but a cosmic point. My earthly eye is too farsighted and usually looks through the most beautiful things. Thus, people often say of me: "Why, you know, he does not see the most beautiful things."

Art is a parable of creation. God, too, did not particularly concern himself with the stages that happened to arise by chance.

2. Family Background. Childhood. Parents

The home in which Paul Klee grew up was completely different from that of the ordinary family of the nineteenth century. It was thoroughly unconventional and unbourgeois. The atmosphere of freedom, the utter lack of repression, permitted the hidden talents of the gifted child to unfold early in life. Both parents showed full consideration for young Paul's diverse interests—and eighty years ago such an attitude toward a child was a notable exception. Music was the sovereign thing in this peculiar family, and was the source of its livelihood; but the other Muses were not neglected.

Paul Klee's father, Hans Klee, taught music at the teachers college of the Canton of Bern in the towns of Hofwil and Bern. In the course of forty-five years he taught more than three generations; there are innumerable testimonials of esteem from his many pupils, and endless anecdotes concerning him. An excellent pedagogue, he was loved and feared by both his pupils and his colleagues.

Born in 1849 in the small town of Tann, in the Rhön Mountains, Hans Klee grew up in Lower Franconia. When he was five his family moved to Würzburg. His mother separated from her husband and had to fend for herself. She raised her two children, Hans and his sister, with great love, and provided Hans with the best educational opportunities. While he was still attending grammar school he studied music under a member of the town orchestra, learning to play a number of instruments. At the age of seventeen he entered the teachers college in Altdorf, Middle Franconia. After a year spent as a student teacher he returned to the college to take his examination as a grammar-school teacher. Having passed the examination, he went in 1869 to the small town of Amorbach in Lower Franconia, where he taught at the school attached to the steel foundry. The Duchess of Leiningen, whose residence was in Amorbach, learned from Hans Klee's landlady of his extraordinary musical gifts. She herself played first violin in her household quartet, and invited Hans to participate. One day she asked him whether he would not like to study at a conservatory. Hans admitted that he did not have the means. The Duchess thereupon offered him a stipend, so that he could attend the Stuttgart Conservatory of Music. There, at the age of twenty-two, he met an eighteen-year-old girl from Basel, Ida Frick, who was studying piano and singing. In 1873, the two were married in Walzenhausen, near Lake Constance. There Hans Klee took his first teaching post, and in 1876, their first child, Mathilde, was born. In 1877, he taught music for a while in Basel, and in 1878, took the post at the Bern teachers college where he was to remain for the rest of his life. For a while Hans and Ida Klee lived near the Hofwil branch of the college in Münchenbuchsee. There, in 1879, their

second child, Paul Klee, was born. Concerning his earliest childhood Paul Klee himself wrote the following lines in his diary (No. 1):

I must preface my memories of childhood with the statement that I am said to have been born in the schoolmaster's house at Münchenbuchsee, near Bern, on December 18, 1879. When I was several months old my father, then teaching music at the Bern Teachers College of Hofwil, received permission to live in Bern. At first we moved, I hear, into the proletarian neighborhood of Aarbergergasse, and soon afterward to Hallerstrasse 32. I cannot remember this apartment either; my memories begin with the next, Hallerstrasse 26. I lived there from my third to my tenth year. Then we moved to the Kirchfeld district, where I spent my later, less pure childhood—Marienstrasse 8. During my last years of Gymnasium we lived in the family seat in Obstberg—Obstbergweg 6.

Alongside his profession as a musician, Hans Klee was particularly interested in the cultivation of the German language. He demonstrated his command of its rhythms and harmonies chiefly in translations from the Bible and in theological disputations. In addition, he was fond of tinkering: he made pipes, fishhooks, and bows and arrows with considerable skill. Paul Klee and his father were good friends. Paul's own comment in his diary (No. 7) clearly describes his attitude toward his father:

For a good long time I believed unconditionally in Papa and took his remark "Papa can do anything" for the literal truth. Only I could not bear it when the old boy ridiculed me. Once, thinking I was alone, I was engaged in fantastic pantomimic games. A sudden, amused "Pf" upset and insulted me. Later, too, this "Pf" cropped up now and again.

It was this vein in Father Hans which prevented him from understanding what his son was really trying to do in art. We can deduce a great deal concerning the relationship between father and son from the following postcard dated October 18, 1897. Paul was on a short trip to Basel. His epistolary style was already distinguished by great conciseness and clarity. Though not yet eighteen, he already knew precisely what attitude he took to things.

Dear Hans,

I am writing to you on a card that was addressed three years ago; that was the time I took that five-day trip with Professor Toble and brought five addressed postcards with me. But three of the five were left lying in the writing kit and I am

Bern. The Industrial Quarter with Cathedral Tower. Pen drawing, 1909.



now gradually using these up. The best of it is that the address forces me to send a few words to you now and then. I know that you neither insist upon that nor expect it. . . . If you were in my place you would not write at all . . . but it will please you nevertheless. . . .

I have discovered *The Bartered Bride* here. If you knew it, you would be convinced that even our contemporary composers cannot write comic operas. Secondly, you should have seen the performance of *Minna von Barnhelm*. Let anyone try to tell me that it is not a comedy! Incidentally, would my otherwise highly unclassical cousin Delly have been amused?

This Sunday afternoon I was with Böcklin again, that is, with his pictures, but the heat or perhaps also the opinions of a number of portly gentlemen of Basel drove me away pretty quickly. This evening I shall bear with the last performance: subscription concert: Beethoven's *A major symphony*! I am leaving tomorrow at 6:28 A.M. and will arrive at 9:12.

Greetings upon greetings. *Au revoir!*

Paul Klee

Paul Klee's only sister, Mathilde, was born in Walzenhausen on Lake Constance on January 28, 1876, and died in Bern on September 6, 1953. From her earliest childhood she had been overshadowed by her brilliant brother. This fact became

the determining element in her life. For years she tended her sick mother and eased her beloved father's declining years. Remarkably gifted in language and extremely musical, she was able to put these talents to good use and earn her living by teaching. She found great fulfillment in this occupation and was thus compensated for any sense of disadvantage she may have felt. My father never in any way behaved toward his sister as if he felt himself more fortunate than she. The family relationship always remained a very good one; its simple cordiality is suggested by the following postcard of July 16, 1927:

Dear Mathilde,

My latest plan now is to drive to southern France via Bern during the next few days. I'll only be stopping briefly in Bern, to fill up on gasoline. You don't have to make any preparations other than fixing up the little room and a bed for me, or if it happens to be rented, then "anywhere." On the way back we'll stay with you longer.

*Fondly,
Paul*

I am very happy to be seeing Papa again, too. Will telegraph arrival time.

Mathilde Klee lived all her life in Bern. In her old age she set down a brief account of her childhood memories. It graphically describes the family milieu and offers an invaluable vignette of her younger brother Paul as child:

He took his first stumbling steps when he was eleven months old. He was a handsome child, with blond curls and brown eyes. He learned to speak quite early. Between the ages of three and five he was very fond of playing with dolls. He also had the habit of throwing objects out the window; when these happened to be silver teaspoons, his mother was not overjoyed. Once a wooden doll went flying through the window pane, whereupon Paul evidently felt pangs of conscience and hid behind the curtain that draped the empty section of the bookcase.

Another time he sadly disappointed Mama by bringing her a leaf-bud from the rubber plant, saying: "The silly leaf has to be punished because it's been so slow about growing." Occasionally he went with Mama to the schoolmaster's to buy honey—and later, when his sister's schoolroom turned out to be in a wing of the schoolmaster's house, Paul said: "You're lucky, Mathilde; you can go to school in the honey house."

Grandmother (Anna Catharina Rosina Frick-Riedtmann, 1817-1884) lived in the city and always had some tea-biscuits on hand for us. Whenever the

weather was nice and Mama thought that a walk to the outskirts of town was indicated, woe betide her if she was unwilling to detour into town—little brother would throw himself down in the dirt and drum his heels against the ground, screaming, “I want to go to Grandma to eat cookies.” He did the same when Mama said he was not yet old enough to ride on the carrousel. Then he was given a spanking, in the course of which the parasol broke in two. That prompted Papa to remark: “A pity the boy is still too small to enjoy his triumph.”

Even before he reached school age, drawing was Paul’s greatest passion. Grandma, one of whose brothers was a very talented painter, did a good deal of drawing to show Paul how it was done. My brother was left-handed, incidentally; except for writing, he did everything with his left hand.

One of our aunts thought “this left-hand nonsense ought to be knocked out of him.” My, how Grandma flared up. “Absolutely not! The child will use the hand that he feels he can use better.”

We have a photograph of Paul as an infant sitting on a velvet-covered chair; he is tugging irritably at his thumb, as was his wont when he was required to sit still, as he had had to at the photographer’s.

Munich: The Railroad Station. *Pen drawing, 1911.*



Paul was a delicate child; like his mother he was delicate and yet resilient. Thus from his first to his fourth year he suffered attacks of angina several times. Then Papa would run off through the icy winter night to the doctor's. Once, when the doctor was away on a call, Mama fetched snow from the balcony and made a throat compress for Paul; and when the doctor finally arrived he said that she had saved the child.

As soon as Paul could read, he collected playbills which Uncle (Ernst Frick) cut out of newspapers for him. He also liked to put on Punch and Judy plays; his audience consisted of the maid, Lina, myself and the children of the household.

We would go to see Grandma almost every day: when he was small, the cookies were the attraction; later she painted miniature pictures for him and cut them out. She gave him drawing paper, colored crayons and a blunted shears. That was how he started making copies of the Lauterburg calendar—he called it the Fludribus Calendar because Fludribus was the nickname of Lauterburg, the painter. This calendar was illustrated with scenes from the vicinity of Bern and inspired Paul to make pencil and pen drawings of the southern outskirts of the city.

Every other year—in 1883, 1885, and 1887—our paternal grandmother (Elise Klee, nee Gobel, 1825-1888) came to visit. In spite of her friendly advances, Paul did not know quite what to make of her. That was partly due to the foreign language she spoke, although Paul was used to High German from Papa's use of it. When it was explained to him that she, who always sent such wonderful Christmas presents, came from the toy city of Nuremberg, he found her more attractive.

Mama had an acquaintance, Frau Lina Wyss, who met Paul one day when he went shopping with our maid Lina. She asked him to give her regards to Mama. Paul informed Mama of this with the words: "Mama, the other Lina sends regards."

"What other Lina?"

"You know, Lina Wyss."

Once he was sent out for rolls, which could be had at the baker's window which opened on the street. Returning, Paul said: "Oh, Mama, the window was closed so I had to fly up the bell."

On Sunday mornings in good weather we were allowed to wait outside the church for Papa, who played the organ at services. Then Papa would take lovely and instructive walks with us, in the summer to the woods, in winter to the museum.

One day Paul received Papa with the reproach: "Papa you always play the organ much too long."

Paul pursued his drawing and other eccentric occupations with real passion in a corner of the room, sitting on his little chair at his play table; and when Mama thought he ought to get a bit of air in the garden, I had to put him out on the steps and close the door behind him.

I must have been a conscientious guardian, for from the time my brother was about four our parents often left us alone in the evening. The door was locked, and we were given a key which, however, we were only to use in case of trouble. A kindly lady who lived in the same house would come to the door now and then. Once there was a comical incident: on this particular night this woman's voice sounded different because of a sore throat. She called through the door to ask whether we were all right. I did not recognize her voice, and said I would not open the door. Paul went to the kitchen, took the carving knife, and posted himself at the crack of the door, the point of the knife so aimed that anyone entering would have been stabbed in the stomach. Then he said to me: "There, Mathilde, now you can open it."

At Christmas or Easter, Paul always wanted to see the Christ Child or the rabbit; he firmly believed in them. That was in keeping with his love for fairy tales; he was never so happy as when he was being read a fairy story. When he was somewhat older he could recite them all by heart.

Then came his first day at school. I did not hear much about it because I had just entered the intermediate school and had to be in class by seven o'clock in the morning. But I still remember how Paul described the coiffure of his first teacher, a Fräulein Mäder, as being like the pope's nose of a chicken.

Paul was a very good pupil and had nothing but Ones—the highest mark—on his first report card. Apparently these did not sufficiently satisfy his vanity. For during the holidays he inserted an exclamation mark after each One. Papa had already signed the report card, and did not look at it again, so that on the first day of school after the holiday Fräulein Mäder noticed it and laughed herself sick. Incidentally, when Paul was small, mother used to take him to school on the first day each year.

At the age of ten Paul entered the Gymnasium. He was excused from the entrance examination. In Gymnasium, too, he was a diligent and intelligent pupil. Science—his special interests were botany and mathematics—the classical languages and many talks with his well-informed father stimulated his active mind.

At the age of fourteen he fell gravely ill. When we called the doctor, he diagnosed severe peritonitis. It is likely that Paul's illness was what we would nowadays call appendicitis.

There is one more interesting factor I should like to mention. During his last two years before graduation Paul began to call his father by his first name.

Sketch for a Portrait of My Father. *Pen drawing, 1909.*



It was a charming note on both sides, testifying to the mutual confidence and the intellectual and spiritual closeness of father and son.

That is the end of these affectionate recollections by Paul Klee's sister. Only Paul's mother, however, recognized her son's true importance as man and artist. His relations with her were always extremely intimate. Her long suffering—she was fettered to her bed by total paralysis for more than twenty years—dominated the family life in the Obstberg house. A system of bell signals enabled her to call any member of the household at once. I myself can well remember my grandmother Ida. She was a strong personality who despite her sufferings radiated kindness and nobility. You could not look at this much-tried woman without feeling the most intense pity. Utterly selfless and uncomplaining, she surmounted her disease. Her great inner vitality prolonged her life for years; she died at the age of sixty-eight, on March 15, 1921, in Bern. At this time my father happened to be working in Weimar, while his family were in Munich. On the afternoon of his mother's death she appeared to him in his studio. After tea he had fallen asleep in a chair. Dozing, he saw his mother enter the room and pass through it. Then she turned back to the door, waved to him several times, and disappeared in the hallway. Paul was not surprised when, a few hours later, a telegram brought him the news of her death. Around this time my father was painting water colors with dark outer

borders from which light flowed inward as to the heart of a crystal. I mention this because the two sets of circumstances may be connected. He later called this time the period of mourning borders.

The following letter of Paul's was written when he was not yet nineteen. He had gone from Bern to Munich, and describes his first impressions in considerable detail for his mother's benefit:

Munich

October 21, 1898

Dear Mama,

Today I received your letter and Mathilde's card. As soon as I received the latter I went to the Red Rooster and fetched her first card, and then I went, getting lost on the way, to the freight office. There I was told: hasn't come yet. I left my address, so I will hear at once when it arrives.

You offer me the addresses of more people, and I have not yet used a single one of those I already have. For the present I don't dare let acquaintances keep me from working. Nuisance enough that the damnable freight business forced me to cut class again today. While I was eating at the Wittelsbacher-Garten Café, Knirr asked about me and sent word to me that he would be expecting me in school at half past eight. This half past eight seemed generous to me because today by chance I came at fifteen to nine and the model was already standing there. "Why, when do you really begin?"—"At eight o'clock." It's incredible.

You speak of landscapes, engraving, Lenbach—1) In the winter one cannot do landscapes. 2) To engrave, one must first know how to draw. 3) Lenbach is not the director, but Professor Löffzg. 4) That "absolutely certain" of Herr Homberg sounds absolutely ridiculous. 5) Likewise his "peppery and salty." Oniony would be it.

And so forth.

Breakfast costs 30 pfennig. Heat is reckoned according to how you use it. There are no pensions at 70 for a distance of a half hour's walk in any direction. I am very content here. Lack for nothing. I enjoy drawing nudes, the more the better.

Send everything I have forgotten. The knife, too, because I'm using a borrowed one. Finally: Lenbach paints landscapes too. The cold only lasted three days. Trip boring as far as Lake Constance. It may be beautiful from Lindau to Munich; I don't know much about it because I slept through that stretch.

From this weird order of answers to your dear letter you can guess how much time I have for writing. Nevertheless I want to try to behave a little more decently. Aside from my disconcerting inexperience in figure drawing (only today my nude figures toppled over), I am nevertheless glad that I did not go to the Academy. For I know that it is no joke, especially for newcomers, to endure with good humor all

the hocus-pocus of the lordly academes. When I happened to say at the studio that I was preparing for the examination, some of the people advised me against it and their advice didn't sound bad. If you make progress with Knirr, they said, you can move on to Stuck in two years. But in the Academy you would certainly take more than two years to achieve what you will achieve privately, and even then it would be a question whether you'd really get into Stuck's class. Knirr, it seems, is friendly with Stuck. Here all the painters are aiming at Stuck. He is the peak. The drill at the Academy is terrible, they say. So much needless waste of time. And the time is so expensive. These are approximately the views of my colleagues—all very nice, gay fellows. There is one older student in particular who has taken some pains with me, and I have already learned a lot from him. Name? When it comes to drawing nudes most of them are practiced to the point of virtuosity. My comfort is an old fellow with a big mustache who entered today and also daubs away heartily. In drawing heads, on the other hand, they are all still daubers. But such nonsense! The man

Sick Woman in Armchair. The Artist's Mother. Pen drawing, 1909.



poses a very young girl, and we're supposed to bring out a likeness! When I said: Why that? "Just because it's hard." That's how things are in the Munich schools. And when I said: "No beginner can do anything with that." "Just wait a couple of years, and you'll find it even harder. By then your naïveté has gone to hell and you fall back on all the well-known tricks of the trade. Then it's a worse mess than ever." Tempting prospect, isn't it?

Well, we will see. If it really turns out to be a matter of staying in the same place, I'll simply go in for landscape next spring. But I'm talking too much in advance. N. B.: I still think, with good reason, that there would be no sense attending the university. Greetings. To Herr Leuenberger too. Greetings! Greetings! Greetings!

Paul

I have been writing so much about myself that I've quite forgotten to wish you good health.

It is perhaps somewhat overbold of me, as a son, to say anything about my parents' six-year-long engagement. However, Paul Klee himself has given an extensive and frank account of it in his diaries, for this relationship was of decisive import for him. Perhaps his candor will excuse my adding some comments of my own.

My mother's proper names were Caroline Sophie Elisabeth, but she was always called Lily. She was the elder daughter of Dr. Ludwig and Annemarie Stumpf, nee Pohle. Lily Stumpf was born in Munich in 1876. Her father was Catholic, her mother, who came from Mecklenburg, Protestant. When Lily was not yet seventeen, her mother died. A few years later Dr. Stumpf remarried a Fräulein Marie Schneider who was only a few years older than her two stepdaughters.

How much Lily meant to Paul is evident from this diary entry of July, 1901 (No. 173):

I have given you everything and yet have given you nothing, considering that I first received my life from your hand—that you have brought me to new birth in beauty—the beloved as mother of the resurrected, the moral man.

Lily very quickly recognized the towering quality of Paul's personality. Her energy, love and intelligence overcame all the obstacles placed in her way by her father and stepmother. Her profession as licensed music teacher and pianist formed the foundation of the family-to-be. The following letter of Paul to his fiancée dates from 1903. The couple were considering moving to Trier in order to rescue Lily from her unhappy family life. This plan, however, was eventually dropped.

Bern

Wednesday, January 18, 1903

Dearest beloved heart!

Thank you ever so much for your dear letter; to judge by it, your father has not yet made any definite decision. If a suitable position in Trier should turn up for you, you would be right to give the matter the most serious consideration. I must say that the Trier plan isn't bad at all; after a while you would find the small town acceptable. But I also think that, since it would be a question of changing to a less desirable locality, the salary ought to promise a relatively carefree existence! So please let me hear whatever more detailed information you receive about it.

Before I forget: I want to tell you that Frau Moilliet seems willing to take in Frau von Kaulbach's sister. The enclosed card, which she sent us in answer to a query, makes everything clear. The place is quiet, rural, fifteen minutes from the center of the city, near a streetcar stop, etc. The family is very respectable, the woman a model housekeeper (we don't get any commission).

I am facing a kind of crisis in my work: I'm fairly sure I will have the twelve plates I have determined on done by spring, and am already confronting the question: "What next?" More engraving—I'm not that one-sided. I am therefore thinking of relief and of lithography; the latter, you know, can be treated in quite similar fashion, with the pen and a little toning. The relief requires several worked-out drafts and it would depend on whether I could manage one.

When I consider this situation, my moods give me distinct insight into my character. Do you think I was pleased? I am constantly grumbling at myself because the crisis has lasted exactly a year longer than I originally counted on; you remember, of course, that when you were with me in Bern the first time I was hoping to have ten or twelve plates done by spring. Then, too, in the impending change of my medium I can already sense that whole cycle of new struggles, states of hopelessness, lows, comparisons, relative satisfaction, renunciation of the supreme expression, disparity between what I produce and what I dreamed of, and the whole charming bagful.

Incidentally my Comedian II has been good for a handsome edition of fifty copies; Girardet thought another fifty could be printed; that's pretty nice. For I'd like to wait with the copper-facing or steel-plating until it is necessary, and until I find somebody who does it well. That's one small silver lining. Other silver linings: that I at last know an address for zinc plates (in Zurich) and am no longer dependent on Balmer, who makes such complications. How full of variety daily life is.

One book from which I am deriving more stimulus and comfort than I can say (affirmation of my own exertions, more by his fate than by his actual views about life) is the Journals of Hebbel. I have started the second volume and intend to read

through it and make notes in it. I've read Brodinhello's first book and am letting him go for the time being. It's not a very important book, but interesting in that he has become modern again, for the second time, as a matter of fact. Schlegel's *Lucinde* was his first resurrection—I am speaking rather generally of the age of romanticism, which I know as a *Lucinde's* paradise—and this type of thing has become popular again, in our day; hence the resplendent edition, which is in itself a great pleasure. . . . Hebbel is altogether my writer, whom I do not only respect as I do a Goethe or Shakespeare, but genuinely love, the man above all. Of his works I can only say that my mind is not yet able to comprehend their full greatness; consequently they can only grow for me, perhaps beyond everything else in literature. I suppose I love the man chiefly because he is great and has also suffered injustice.

What do I say about Hermine? The thing evoked neither admiration nor contempt from me, did not really surprise me at all. And I decidedly think the handsome doctor is half a fool. The next one will probably be just as handsome, and just as insignificant. That is Hermine for you, to put it bluntly.

Something else on my mind: the explanation of the delayed gift. With us it is also the custom to give presents on New Year's Day, and when I saw that the books could not reach you for Christmas, I deliberately kept them back, read the *Don Juan*, a brilliant thing, by the way, and sent them for New Year's Day. That is the truth. The paper is bad, by German standards, but the edition is practical and well made. It is being small to judge a person's love by the presents he gives, or even by whether or not he gives them on time.

Bloesch is back again; he brought me the very pretty little frame, for which I thank you heartily. He had a great deal to tell about Vienna; he's had luck with performances again, as always. After all I suppose I do feel like seeing Vienna, but I'm afraid there wouldn't be anything very pleasant about the expense. Then, too, I don't understand his going in the middle of winter; it seems he froze a good deal of the time. Their opera is said to be on a very high level; the playbills look quite provincial, or worse; not even the name of the conductor is on them.

Thanks for the many music journals; I'm going to be fascinated by a great deal in them, for example the discussion of Strauss' *Sinfonia Domestica*, etc. It is remarkable that Cologne and Vienna are likewise thinking of putting on model performances for the tourists; furthermore, I read an extremely savage criticism of the Munich production of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide*.

I've written this letter all in one rush, so to speak; perhaps with the desire to show you that you oughtn't to make me wait so long for letters! Especially now when such important things are happening to you. Naturally I won't be going to the Peasant Ball; you know I don't care for surprises.

Good-by, my beloved Lily; may you be granted swift recovery from everything

bad. I'm not concerned about gaiety and laughter. But I am about general welfare, human dignity and all the rest of such things.

With fond and tender kisses from

Your Paul

The Man with the Wing did not print so badly, but I want to work on it again, though I don't know how it will turn out. Intellectually, at any rate, the work is among my best.

My father met Lily in Munich shortly after the turn of the century. Her parents soon made plain their opposition to the marriage. Relations with young Klee were broken off rather abruptly, which prompted Paul to make the following entry in his diary (No. 736):

I have written placatingly to my prospective father-in-law against his will:

*"My dear Herr Medizinalrat:**

"I have heard from Lily that you were angry at our announcing our engagement to friends. I know that you spoke against it in the past, but I do not understand how you can go on thinking of the possibility of concealment. So it was best, after all, for us to announce the irrevocable fact. We only regret not having informed you beforehand.

"With best regards,

"Sincerely,

"Paul Klee"

If I had not written in such mild terms, Lily would have to bear the brunt of her father's anger after her return to Munich. He will have to swallow infinitely more bitter pills when we are married next summer. This time he replied quite politely, though he asks sardonically what we plan to live on.

When Dr. Ludwig Stumpf died in Bad Wiessee in 1923, my father sent his condolences to his widowed mother-in-law in the following affectionate letter.

Weimar

December 14, 1923

Dear Marie,

The painful news that Papa died on Sunday has just reached me. I am so very sorry! I am sorry especially for you, that you no longer have him and no longer can

* Medical Councilor—an honorary title awarded to doctors in Germany. (Translators' note.)

care for him with such moving and beautiful devotion, as you have been doing all along.

But it must be a real comfort to all of us that his declining years were made so harmonious by your love. The one thing that was not to be granted him was his intense wish to be well again and to move to Tölz.

I hope that his death came gently and without any awareness that he had at last to leave you alone. For that is certainly the hardest thing we can have to endure in our later years: this being left behind alone.

But you did more than your duty for him; you loved him as loyally as any man can wish. For us, too, in these last days, it has been a great reassurance to us that he had this happiness, and we thank you.

Fate would have it that Lily was bedridden at the time and unable to travel. But now she is going to help you all she can, for you must start to think of yourself a little, too.

Awaiting further news from Lily, I am, with warm greetings

Yours,
Paul

3. My Own Recollections of My Parents' Household

At this point, I shall offer my own recollections of my parents' household. I cannot hope to set down anything like a full account of my experiences with my father, for until I was twenty-one I was with him almost all the time. However, I shall try to render the quintessence of what life with this truly great man was like.

My earliest memory of childhood goes back to prewar 1914 in Munich. We lived in the part of the city known as Schwabing. We had a small, dark, three-room apartment in the rear building of Ainmillerstrasse 33. My mother was active as a concert pianist and earned a living for the family by giving lessons. As a teacher she was very popular with her pupils, and her daily schedule very often included from eight to ten hours of lessons, some of which she gave at home, some away from home. Her place of work was the largest room in the apartment, in which stood a Blüthner concert grand. Very little light came through the single window of this room; it was necessary to have the sputtering gaslight on and kerosene lamps going even by day. In order to keep people from knocking their heads against the chandelier, my father had draped it with a red silk scarf as a warning. The two kerosene lamps looked like nuns and rocked in time to the music during my mother's vigorous playing. In the course of the First World War these lamps were replaced by carbide lamps, which gave a great deal of light but smelled horrible and threatened to explode at the most awkward moments.

In the second room, the living room, stood an enormous amount of heavy furniture through which you had to navigate skillfully in order to reach the small upright piano. This had a silencing practice pedal so that my mother could play on it far into the night without having the neighbors knock indignantly on the ceiling. This room, too, was in constant darkness. The gas lamp flickered nervously, and I can still remember my father's flying into a rage at it and addressing it: "You wait, you slut, I'll throw you out the window one of these days." As a matter of fact, my father was dependent upon this artificial illumination, for he often went on with his drawing at night.

The third room was the common bedroom. There were two beds for the three of us. Then there was a long, unlit hallway, which was also crammed full of furniture, a bathroom with a coal stove, a small maid's room where visitors were usually put up, and on the north side a large kitchen with a wrought-iron balcony. For years this kitchen was necessarily my father's chief working room. He took charge of the running of the household and prepared all our meals. It was sheer pleasure to watch my father cooking. He managed the work very easily, and did

it with delight, as though it were just the same as painting or making music. We usually had five or six courses, which my father skillfully prepared in the French or Italian manner. The portions were never too large, the menu full of variety; everything was cooked with infinite subtlety, and we all enjoyed his cuisine enormously. One of my father's aunts owned the Hotel Waldrand in Beatenberg, where he had always spent vacations during his childhood, and he often used to tell us that he had learned a great deal from a French cook there.

He devoted the afternoons and evenings to his "own" art: in his kitchen studio he worked from nature or from imagination and memory, doing oils, water colors and extremely fine drawings. Or else he would toil like an alchemist preparing his engravings. After the copper and zinc had been tooled, the plates were dipped for a certain length of time in acid baths, uncovered, scrutinized, taken out, put back and checked again.

My parents would spend their evenings playing sonatas by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Reger—as a sort of rehearsal when they were alone, and as finished concerts when we had visitors, as we so frequently did.

Since my mother was so taken up with her professional work, my father assumed charge of my upbringing. He took full responsibility for this complex task, for not only was he deeply concerned about my welfare but he found the processes of child development fascinating. For example, he kept a careful record in his diary of the various stages of my learning to talk. Under the heading of "Felix Calendar" I also find an account of the bad case of swollen glands that I had, which in the end necessitated an operation. He took daily notes of my temperature readings, and traced the course of the disease with great care. My father also kept an affectionate watch over my artistic development. He saved every water color and every drawing I did, discussed the subject of each one with me, mounted many of the sheets with the same care he gave to his own, and put them away in a special folder. In later years he used to like to tell me little anecdotes out of my childhood—how, for example, I would be playing locomotive and in "driving past" would call out to him: "Don't touch me; I'm frightfully hot." Or the time I drew a rectangle on a sheet of paper and my father asked what it was. My answer was: "That's Uncle Fritz." To which my father replied: "Yes, but where is Uncle Fritz? I don't see him anywhere on the paper." I answered: "Well, you know, he's just this minute gone out." Out of these many years of loving care on my father's part there grew up an intimate understanding between the two of us which persisted even when we no longer lived under the same roof.

In fine weather my father liked to go tramping in the country. On such occasions I had to help carry his easel and folding chair. Hirschau, that lovely natural extension of the Englischer Garten, was often the goal of our outings. There my

father spread his painting things out on the grass, set up the easel, arranged his paints in the paint-box and clamped to it various tin bowls which he carefully filled with water. He would take the canteen of water from his coat pocket as if it were something rare and precious. Then he might sit motionless, working for hours at a time—sheet after sheet, while I played nearby or tried my hand at painting, too. At other times he went to ordinary building sites or to the unromantic houses of the farther outskirts of Munich and along the Nymphenburg Canal in Milbertshofen. There I could float the sailboat he had made for me. It sailed along magnificently and gave me the utmost pleasure. I tethered it with a length of string to keep it from being swept downstream. Thus I was beautifully occupied while my father worked; painting, drawing, and painting again.

4. Relations with Kandinski and Franz Marc

The period from 1906 to 1914 was especially vital in the history of Munich. Music, poetry and above all the plastic arts were developing along revolutionary lines. There was a strange juxtaposition of Bavarian rusticity, bock beer, philistinism and an avant-garde that for a while led something of an underground existence. To leaf through the *Blauer Reiter*, published by Piper Verlag of Munich in 1912 and edited by Franz Marc and Vasili Kandinski, is to be amazed and captivated by the heroic avant-garde spirit of the time. Anyone who had the good fortune to play some part in that great movement has remained a person of importance down to the present day. It was not always easy for Kandinski to keep to the path on which he had courageously struck out; that is evidenced by his dedication to Paul Klee in the *Blauer Reiter*: "To my dear colleague Klee in memory of the evil days. Kandinski."

Paul Klee recorded his first meeting with Kandinski in his diary for the fall of 1911 (No. 903):

Kandinski, of whom I have frequently spoken in the past, and who lives only one house up the street, still exerts an enormous attraction upon Moilliet. He often goes over to see him, sometimes taking works of mine with him and bringing non-objective paintings by the Russian back to me. Very curious paintings. This same Kandinski wants to set up a new society of artists. Since meeting him personally I have conceived a somewhat greater confidence in him. He is somebody and has an unusually fine and clear mind.

First we met in a café in town; Amiet and his wife were passing through the city and were there too. Then, riding home on the streetcar, we agreed to meet more often. In the course of the winter I joined his Blauer Reiter.

The revolutionary work of Kandinski, who had already painted the first abstract picture by 1910, was a kind of counterpoint to the aims of the cubists in Paris. A whole Russian colony gathered around Kandinski. Thus, as early as that, Munich was the center of a modern art which was to have incalculable effects down to the present day. Franz Marc was equally the co-creator of the new age. The outbreak of the war put a temporary end to this collaboration. The Russians fled into neighboring Switzerland. At that time Kandinski wrote the following letter to my father, who was in Bern:

August 15, 1914

Dear Herr Klee,

We have arrived in your native land rather unexpectedly, after some not exactly expected hardships, and have been hospitably received. A clergyman of my acquaintance has offered us his empty villa, where we are living as thriftily as possible. We three from Ainmillerstrasse, Mrs. Kandinski, her sister with husband and daughter. Our address is Goldach am Bodensee, Mariahalde.

Where are you? In Switzerland, too, I hope—that is to say in virtually the only country in Europe where the atmosphere of the future has not been expelled by hate. I read with great pleasure an editorial in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* which so excellently expressed the Swiss spirit. There is a voice out of the future music of united humanity. What do you know about our friends? We visited the Marcs before our sudden departure from Murnau. They were in a gloomy mood. Where are the Helbigs? Amiets? Moilliets? Dr. Worringer? Dr. Stadler? If you are in Bern, you could do me a great favor. My brother-in-law, Herr Scheimann, has Danish, Swedish and Russian money which cannot be exchanged here. But we would like to have as large a stock of Swiss money as possible. Would you be so good as to inquire at some large bank in Bern as to whether this money can be exchanged there and at what rate, that is, what such moneys have yielded and what might be paid for them now. If the money can be exchanged at a relatively favorable rate, I would then make my second request. Might I then send the foreign money to you for exchange? Please forgive these troublesome missions. We are trying to obtain money from all possible sources.

If you intend to travel to Germany, we would be very happy to meet you in Rorschach when you pass through—Goldach is actually a suburb of Rorschach. I don't know whether you will receive this letter. So I must close. It would be good to have some word from you.

Our cordial greetings to you two and Felix.

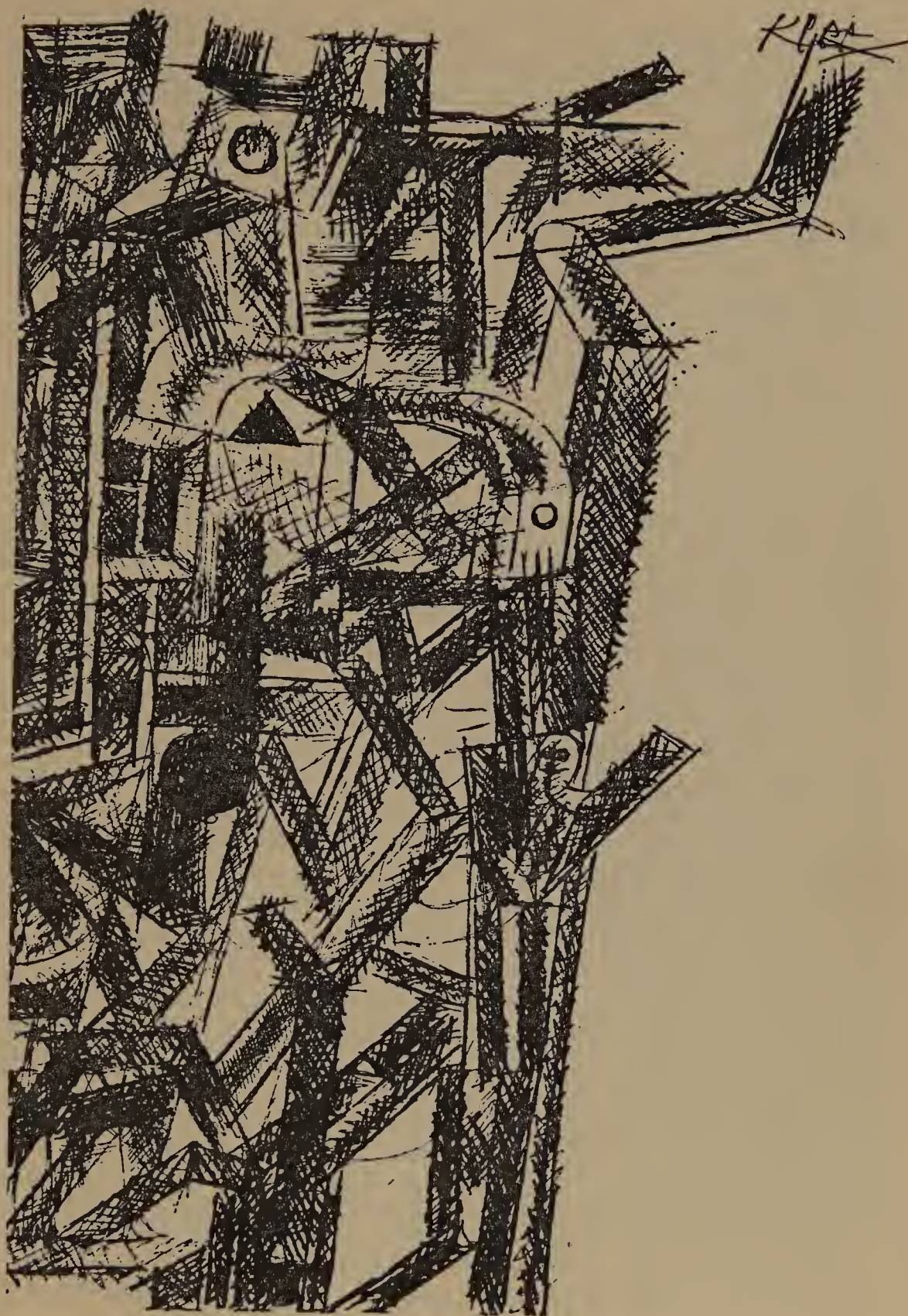
Yours,
Kandinski

Three weeks later Kandinski wrote another letter to Paul Klee:

Mariahalde, Goldach
St. Gall
September 10, 1914

Dear Friends,

What can your silence mean? Where are you, Herr Klee? Yesterday we re-received word about Mitrin. He is quite safe. Today a card from [Herwarth]



Abstract Cave Architecture. *Pen drawing, 1915.*

Walden, dated August 29. He has dismissed his office staff, his financial situation is so bad. Where is Marc, that is, in what garrison? Have you any news from Frau Marc? What has happened to your brother's estate? Have you received our letter thanking you for so promptly taking care of the exchange business?

Today was a day of great rejoicing for us: we received our *first* news from Russia. We had heard nothing for six weeks. Ways are at last being found for letters to go through. What a joy it will be when this terrible time is over. What will come next? A great unleashing of inner forces, I think, which will also make for brotherhood. That means also a great efflorescence of art, which now has to hide in corners. Do write again soon! Many warm greetings from us both.

Yours,
Kandinski

On the return journey from Bern to Munich toward the end of September, 1914, we visited Kandinski and Gabriele Münter in Goldach. In the extensive garden belonging to the house was a tool shed which Kandinski was using as a studio. I was seven at the time; wandering through the park I discovered the shed and wanted to go in. But as I entered I heard a long-drawn-out ghostly sigh. "Who's there?" I called. No answer. Then the uncanny moan was repeated. I decided to lock the ghost in, and innocently continued my walk, well satisfied with myself. When we assembled for lunch, Kandinski was missing. Where could he possibly be? We all went out into the garden to look for him, and saw him waving to us from the attic window of the shed. He was the ghost I had locked in, and had been unable to get out. A burst of liberating laughter was the end of this episode. In childhood and after I was grown up my relations with Kandinski were always of the best. When I was five I frequently used to go two houses up the street, to Ainmillerstrasse 36, where Kandinski lived. There, stimulated by the pictures he showed me, I would paint water colors in his manner. Franz Marc, who was a great animal lover, was equally fond of children. Being an officer, he was called up as soon as war was declared. It is amazing and admirable that in spite of being on active duty he still found time to draw and to go on developing his artistic theories. A letter of his to Paul Klee, written during the first year of the war, gives a clear picture of the artistic problems that were preoccupying him.

May 10, 1915

Dear Klee,

Your fine letter was a real act of friendship which did me a great deal of good. You, your wife and Maria, all three of you seem to be engaged in a



Paul Klee at the age of thirteen. Taken in Bern, 1892.



(Above) Paul Klee as a senior at the Gymnasium. Bern, 1897. (Below) From the "piglet book" of a boyhood friend, R.T. Each of the friends had to draw blindfolded a picture of a piglet in the album. Paul Klee's comment reads: "I wish you and me something like this in our careers, but more complete."

Solches, aber vollkome-
neres Wunsch ich dir
& mir auf unsern
Lebenslauf.

Paul Klee

24. V. 98.



Hand-drawn geometric diagrams and sketches of faces on a notebook page. The diagrams include circles, lines, and points, with handwritten notes in German. The sketches show various profiles and expressions of faces.

Handwritten notes (German):
 1. Die beiden Kreise sind sich die Tangenten...
 2. Die beiden Kreise sind sich die Tangenten...
 3. Die beiden Kreise sind sich die Tangenten...

38. Bestimmung der Tangenten

Handwritten notes (German):
 1. Die Tangente...
 2. Die Tangente...
 3. Die Tangente...

Mathematical derivations:
 $y^2 = 2px$
 $P: (x', y')$
 $T: (x, y)$
 $PT \perp OP$
 $xy' = 2px'$
 $y^2 - y'^2 = 2p(x - x')$
 $(y - y')(y + y') = 2p(x - x')$
 $\frac{y - y'}{x - x'} = \frac{2p}{y + y'}$
 $T: y - y' = \frac{2p}{y + y'}(x - x')$
 $y - y' = \frac{2p}{2y}(x - x')$
 $y - y' = \frac{p}{y}(x - x')$
 $y - y' = \frac{p}{y}(x - x')$
 $T: y - y' = \frac{p}{y}(x - x')$

(Above) Two pages from Paul Klee's geometry notebook, 1898. (Below) African Ostrich, 1895. Pen drawing by Paul Klee at the age of sixteen.



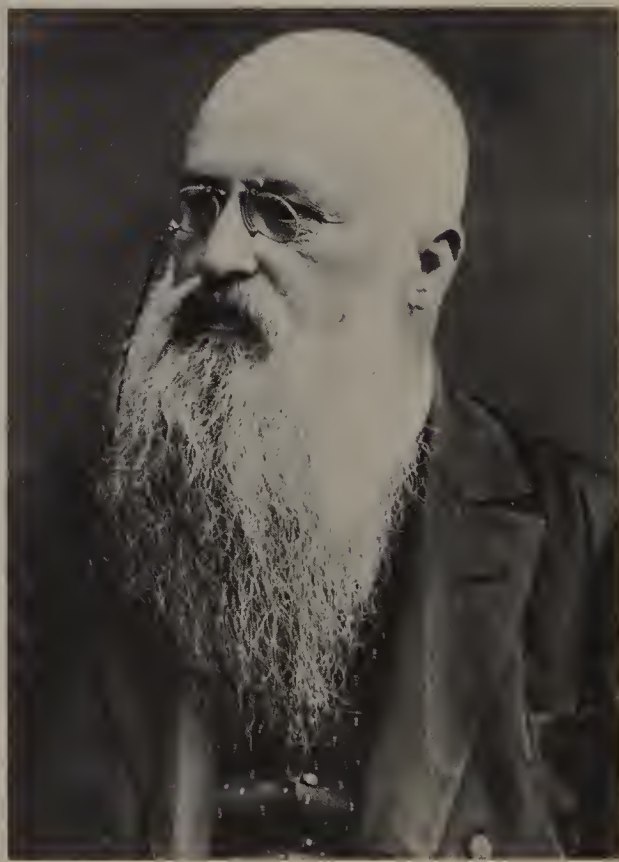


(Above) Portrait of My Sister in Profile. *Pen drawing, 1909.* (Below, left) *Paul Klee's grandmother Elise, nee Gobel. Nuremberg, 1868.* (Below, right) *Paul Klee's mother Ida, nee Frick, 1876.*





(Above) *Paul Klee at seventeen, in the garden at home, Bern, 1896.* (Below, left) *My Father. Glass painting, 1906.* (Below, right) *Paul Klee's father, Hans Klee, Bern, 1909.*





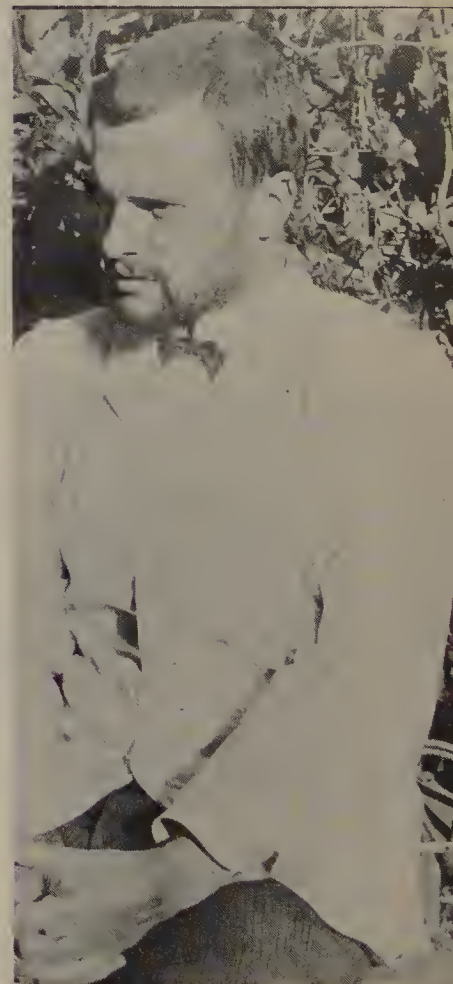
*Lily and Paul Klee (seated) shortly after their marriage; Mathilde Klee standing.
In the garden of the Klee home, Obstbergweg 6, Bern, 1906.*



Munich. Glass painting, 1908. View from the balcony of Klee's apartment on Ainmillerstrasse, corner of Hohenzollernstrasse.



(Above) Child in Folding Chair II (Felix). Wash drawing, 1908. (Below, left) Felix Klee with toy ship made by his father. Bern, 1910. (Below, center) Lily Klee in Bern, 1906. Photograph by Paul Klee (section). (Below, right) Paul Klee on the terrace of the Obstbergweg house in Bern, summer, 1908.



veritable and thoroughly embittered intellectual contest. I know Maria well, as you are aware; once she has set up an "ideal requirement," she won't let go. She will also immediately pose the self-tormenting question of conscience, whereas most people buck themselves up by giving themselves a vote of confidence. Those are the happier and healthier personalities. But the question of conscience—the question of the nature of the thing, the essence—still remains the ultimate and inescapable question, not your "romanticism and me!" The "me" can always be side-stepped without ill effects—it will be and must be side-stepped—but the other question cannot be side-stepped, the *Mensch, werde wesentlich!* Here I am wholly within the framework of Maria's ideas, but for me some very different conclusions emerge from case to case, and above all I almost completely reject Tolstoi's train of thought in *What Is Art?* It is sophistical, hopeless do-goodism and shallow Christianity. But I am firmly convinced that Europe is a most unfortunate, unhealthy nutritive soil for pure art—that is for religious art of universal validity. Maria, led astray by Tolstoi, makes one great mistake, as I see it: she confuses universal validity with universal comprehensibility! Likewise, like Kandinski, in a good many specific instances she misses the mark, or at any rate shoots far beyond her own goal and neglects what is best. In Kandinski there is a great deal that is impure, that is to say, vain, too personal and thus uninteresting, which includes personal intellectual crotchets; but there is just as much that is splendid, universally valid, final statement, so that the good outweighs his weaknesses. Maria put it very well in a recent letter when she said that everything depends on the accent: in art we may not say: *I feel so, I have experienced and suffered this or that*; but rather: *I feel, I experienced, I suffered*. That says almost everything—but of how few pictures and pieces of music can we say that? Of the master of the *Marienleben*, yes; of Dürer—with the exception of a few woodcuts—no. We have a fine criterion here; only we must not apply it merely, or rather not at all, to Beethoven and Michelangelo and so on. It is best applied primarily to—ourselves. Where the ego is taken too seriously, more seriously than the *thing* itself—there you have bad, impure art. The artist is a tool and creates selflessly—the ancients called it inspiration, ecstasy—and hides behind his work like the evangelist behind the evangel. It is not for him to confer greatness upon the *work*—his own always limited, conditional greatness—the work must confer it upon *him*. That is the only way in which the work grows to limitlessness and timelessness. But how are we going to tear out this ego-ness, this root of our European impurity and impiousness? In the *Aphorisms* I saw in exact science the possibility for a purification—but I still have to do a great deal of thinking about that. I am really like a field over which the plowshare

has passed; everything has been dug up, there is pain everywhere; it's a gruesome condition. It's very good that I am wearing a uniform; nobody can see what's inside, and perhaps everything will knit up a little before I come home. Otherwise I'll be in a sorry state.

Cordially yours,
Franz Marc

5. More Household Memories

As a boy of eight I could, of course, only dimly surmise the importance of all these outstanding personalities. For I was busy building up my own world. What sense I had of the significance of people and the times came to me from listening to the conversation of my parents.

I was greatly impressed in those days by our twice-yearly visit to the market fair in Munich. My father would always take me with him. He used to buy old frames from the peddlers, and was particularly fond of oval ones which usually came to two marks, the pictures included. In order to be able to make his purchases undisturbed, my father would deposit me at the Punch-and-Judy show. The highly burlesque performances had a powerful effect upon my child's imagination. My dearest wish was to become the director of such a theater, and this wish was fulfilled on my ninth birthday, when I was presented with eight puppets. My father had made the puppet heads mostly out of plaster; in later years he used other materials, such as papier-maché, matchboxes or discarded lamp sockets. Then he painted the crude heads in subtle or grotesque colors, according to the characters they were representing. For costumes he had ransacked my mother's drawer of odds and ends of fabric. To make it a real surprise, he had had the costumes for this first set sewed by Sach Morgenthaler in her pension on Schellingstrasse. Later my father even did this work himself on our own old-fashioned sewing machine.

A picture frame pasted over with jolly colored cloth was hung in the doorway between the living room and the bedroom. The space beneath it was screened by a drape that had seen its best days. Another bit of brightly figured cloth was the curtain proper, and for backdrop I had a Bavarian village with characteristic onion-dome church tower that my father had made for me. If my parents happened to be going out to a concert or an evening at the theater—which was quite rare—and therefore put me to bed early, I would get up secretly after they were gone and ring a small cowbell to announce the opening of the performance. Then our tiger cat Fritzki would sit on the table, eagerly watching the dramatic action of a number of adventure plays with such characters as Punch, Gretel, Death, Death's wife, the devil and the devil's grandmother, and the voracious crocodile.

People who know only a painter's works may have an altogether misguided idea of what he is like as a person. Paul Klee, judged by his pictures, was thought to be big, portly, completely unapproachable, and absent-minded. Almost everybody who met him was surprised by his small stature and delicate frame, his plain, rather old-fashioned dress, his modest demeanor and his reticence. Yet he was receptive

to all aspects of life; his dark southlander's eyes took in all the phenomena of nature; and he was of an extremely practical turn of mind. Not only did he paint his pictures; he also prepared his own colors, made the frames and mats, and kept a methodical list of each work, with measurements and technique. He did all his painting and drawing with his left hand; even when he hammered a nail or assembled molding for frames, he took the hammer in his left hand. Writing alone was done with his right; however, he could do mirror-writing nimbly and correctly with his left hand. There was nothing, no matter how trivial-seeming, which might not suddenly excite his interest. The incredible versatility of his art was based upon keen daily observation of his surroundings. Of course his conduct toward his pupils and admirers differed from his behavior in his family. Although our little family group was very well aware of my father's greatness and the force of his personality, and although we adored him, he was usually gay, natural, sometimes a little cynical and always rather superior toward us. His manner of speaking was quiet and gentle; his voice had a dark timbre. In spite of his being so intensely musical he had, to his own sorrow, a rather poor singing voice; he always sounded slightly hoarse when he sang. His High German bore distinct traces of his Alemannic origins. In the family, however, or with Swiss, he preferred to speak his usual Bernese German. Frequently he used the dialect as a kind of secret language when he wished to relieve his feelings by sarcastic remarks about Germans.

My mother was probably the first person who recognized Klee's importance—and that long before their marriage. From the first day of their acquaintance she believed unshakably in him. The personalities of the two harmonized perfectly and supplemented one another: my mother an inspired musician, my father deeply involved in graphic creation.

The annual trips to Bern were great events to me. I could hardly wait until we reached Lake Constance. At Lindau we transferred to the ship, which took us across to Romanshorn on the Swiss side, often in stormy weather. Then we went on to Zurich by express. We would have to wait until next day to go on to Bern, and so would spend the night in the Hotel Central. There my father met like-minded artists and collectors. In Bern Aunt Mathilde would be waiting for us; because of the many exits from the railroad station, however, we usually missed her. We got into a horse-drawn cab and crossed the Kirchenfeld bridge to Obstberg. My grandparents' house with its dream atmosphere was so altogether different from our own home in Munich. How quiet and changed my father was here; his invalid mother clearly loved and worshiped him; his obdurate father would observe him with a slightly critical air. Hans Klee lived so entirely in his own world that he could not possibly keep pace with his son's rapidly evolving art. Once Hans Klee was asked to choose one of his son's works for a birthday present; he took the

Gray Old Camel from the Kairouan period because, as he said, he felt a certain resemblance to it.

When my father was discharged from military service in 1919 he was full of energy and eagerness. Hans Goltz, the courageous art dealer who had early displayed abstract art to the astounded townsfolk of Munich in his rooms on Briennerstrasse, twice signed a three-year contract with my father. As I have said, our own apartment lacked suitable working space and my father began looking about for a studio. He found one in the charming little rococo palace of Suresnes on Werneckstrasse in Altschwabing. Here he rented a splendid room with a view of the ancient park full of grottoes and winding paths, and of the adjacent Englischer Garten. Next door to him lived the composer Lahusen and the painter and poet Hans Reichel with his wife, a Spanish dancer of German descent. Paul Klee went off to this new studio each morning as punctually as if he were going to an office. The room could not be used after dark because it had no lights. The Realgymnasium, the secondary school I attended, was nearby, and I would always stop and pick up my father after school so we could walk home together. My father always carried a thin, elegant cane which would hum as he struck it rhythmically against the pavement. When we reached the courtyard of our apartment, he would whistle as the signal of his arrival a long-drawn-out tone descending twice from top to bottom of the range.

With such an idyllic place of work Klee could forget the closeness of a great city. Almost effortlessly and undistractedly, he turned out work after work there. He particularly devoted himself to his long-neglected oil painting. In rainy weather the roof would leak, and to this day I can see my father rushing about the studio setting out vessels to catch the drip.

The summers of the years 1920 to 1922 were a delight to all of us, for we spent them in Possenhofen on Starnberg Lake. My father particularly enjoyed being able to swim to his heart's delight after painting, to go for walks, and above all to fish. The first year—1920—we stayed in the house called "Greeting to God" owned by a Frau von Eckardt, and took our meals in the neighboring tavern, "The Shower." For the next two years—1921 and 1922—we had five rooms at the home of a fisherman named Gebhardt, near the steamer landing. My father painted out in the open air on the huge balcony, using a bench for an easel. In sultry weather he could not resist the temptation to go fishing, since at such times the fish would bite well. Our tomcat Fritz and I waited in great suspense to see what sort of catch he would bring home. Innumerable anecdotes about Father's passion for angling circulated in the family. Once Klee earned the applause of the crowd on deck of the excursion steamer, for just as it arrived he caught a large chub and pulled it in with such vigor that the fish flew in a high arc and landed in the top of a fir tree. Another

time, from the balcony of the bathing hut, my father cast his line so violently that the railing broke and he took an involuntary bath.

On Sundays there was the threat of usually uninvited visitors from nearby Munich. To escape this annoyance my father would tramp to Pöcking—the place ought really to be in China, he used to remark—where there was a great heath near Meisinger Lake. Father knew a great deal about botany and could tell you about the various kinds of wild orchids that grew in that vicinity. If the days grew cool, we were grateful for the stove in our large living room. We would spend our evenings there, and were always amused watching Fritizi's great leaps from cupboard to cupboard as he chased moths.

6. The Bauhaus

In September, 1920, my parents went to visit their friends Yavlenski and Verevkin in Ascona. While he was there, Father received a telegram offering him the appointment to the Bauhaus in Weimar. He accepted the professorship. Since we did not find a place to live in Weimar, my father temporarily divided his time between Munich and Weimar, spending two weeks in one place and two weeks in the other. A year later, in October, 1921, we moved out of the metropolis of Munich to the highly individual small town so rich in tradition in the heart of Thuringia. We found a spacious four-room apartment above Goethe Park, in the house belonging to Count Keyserling. Each day we walked through the park to the Bauhaus. My father went up to his studio on the third floor and I to the cabinetworkers' shops in the rear building, where I worked. At every season of the year Klee made the walk fascinating with his observations. In winter we watched the small coots on the frozen Ilm; like unskillful ice skaters, they frequently tumbled over; in summer the innumerable songbirds, the woodpeckers, the ringdoves; and in the spring my father would tell me the names of all the flowers we saw. In addition we also took pleasure in the historical buildings and monuments of the park—in Goethe's garden house, the Dessau Stone, the log cabin, the Templars' house, and so on. If we happened to miss each other, my father would scratch his insigne into the ground with his cane, at a certain spot before the bridge over the Ilm, as a sign that he had already passed this way.

The tempo of the Bauhaus cast its spell over master as well as apprentice. For years Klee taught there; he would prepare his class sessions carefully, setting down the day's assignments in a blue school notebook with great exactitude. A large band of disciples listened reverently to his lectures. We who knew him well never had suspected that Father was not only a great artist but also a remarkable pedagogue. How fine and stimulating, too, was the contact with other artists, such as Kandinski, Feininger, Itten, Schreyer, Moholy-Nagy, Schlemmer, Marcks and Muche. Kandinski came in 1921 straight from Moscow, with his young wife Nina, bringing all his worldly goods with him in a small suitcase. Johannes Itten lived in the Templars' house; he was a remarkable teacher and conducted the introductory course with great skill. Lothar Schreyer built his glass coffin of a theater. László Moholy-Nagy, the young Hungarian officer, was, unlike the others, an aesthete with a great belief in strict form. Oskar Schlemmer displayed a dazzling versatility as stage designer, dancer, sculptor, painter, humorist and *maitre de plaisir*. Gerhard Marcks, the sculptor, lived like a hermit in the potters' workshop on Dornburg near the Saale. Blond, tall Georg Muche also taught the introductory course. Lyonel

Feininger, nicknamed Papileo, worked in the print shop, printing his finely incised woodcuts on japan paper, exhibiting his architectonic oils and water colors, and putting together his imaginative models of cities, railroad trains and ships, Gertrud Grunow, a gifted musician, saw to the psychological equilibrium of the less well-adjusted pupils; and the head of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, always impeccably dressed and aided by a host of colleagues and pupils, ran the spacious architectural bureau where he planned his modern buildings. His wife, Alma Gropius-Mahler, presided over a thoroughly Viennese salon in her house.

What would the Bauhaus, with its struggles, problems, its Mazdaznan cult and other controversies, have been without its marvelous parties? With the first wonderful Bauhaus band—Hirschfeld at the accordion and Andor Weininger at the piano—we would raise the roof every week at costume balls and original special dances. My father, too, used to put in an appearance at almost all these high jinks at the “Ilmschlösschen” or in the “Goldener Schwan.” Being a nondancer, he used to watch the revels with a faint grin, and in later times with a slight look of boredom, puffing away at his pipe. He would soon leave for home to go back to his work. Every year on May 18, the director’s birthday, there was a special celebration. Once Schlemmer, wearing a flowing black wig, directed a chorus—with the orchestra improvising to the rhythm of his baton—that sang the following ominous text: “Hang, hang, hang! [Pause] The laurel wreath round his neck!” Another time there was a lantern festival. Bearing grotesque lanterns we paraded off to the house of Gropius, then to Johannes Schlaf, and thence across the park “zum Horn” to Klee. Every fall we celebrated the Dragon Festival, and before Christmas the “Yule carnival.” Both the masters and the pupils would be given their gifts. The students had made an enormous number of dolls with strange names for Oskar Schlemmer’s two daughters, Karin and Jaina. Paul Klee, on the other hand, received an admonishment not to hang any monarchist pictures in his apartment—such as *The Great Emperor Rides Off to War*.

Our lovely family habit of music-making was continued in our so splendidly situated Weimar apartment. The ensemble was enlarged with the addition of Karl and Leo Grebe from Jena. On musical days the group “worked” like mad, playing string and piano quartets and quintets by Mozart, Beethoven and Haydn. Paul Klee, who ordinarily seemed so calm and deliberate, would suddenly be blazing with a southern ardor and temperament; he played first violin with passion, and if a movement turned out particularly well, it was usually repeated.

After five years of vital and fruitful work in the Weimar Bauhaus, this happy time came to a sudden end. The first Nazi parliament of the State of Thuringia closed down the school, of which it cordially disapproved, in April, 1925. The up-and-coming city of Dessau offered to take over the entire Bauhaus. So it became necessary for us to move once more, to a totally different environment.

Since the "master's" house which was being built specially for Klee was not ready before the summer of 1926, we remained in our Weimar home for the time being. Once again Klee spent a year traveling at two-week intervals back and forth between the two cities. He had a furnished room with the Kandinskis and taught in the provisional quarters of the new Bauhaus. By July, 1926, the houses for the masters were ready to move into, and in December of that year the new Bauhaus was dedicated with grand festivities.

Dessau was a sleepy little town, formerly capital of the duchy of Anhalt, with an important church, palace, museum, and a well-patronized state theater conscious of its traditions. During the First World War large industrial plants were established there, as was the case everywhere in central Germany, so that the whole city suddenly took on a new look. Mayor Hesse, an active and ambitious town father, wanted to establish some cultural counterpoise to the factories, and this was one of his reasons for taking in the Bauhaus that Weimar had cast out. Gropius had asked for a new building for the school and suitable homes for the masters. That was how the romantic and more modest Weimar Bauhaus came to be replaced in Dessau by the highly functional building which fulfilled the hopes and plans of the founders on so generous a scale.

In July, 1926, we moved into the master's house in Dessau. Burgkühnauerallee number 7, a street that was later renamed Stresemannallee. The colony consisted of five houses: a single house for the director and four double houses for the masters. In these houses lived Gropius, Moholy-Nagy, Feininger, Muche, Schlemmer, Kandinski and Klee. Hence we were separated from the Kandinskis only by a wall; we saw and greeted one another daily without in the least interfering with one another. Our little settlement was situated in one of those pine groves characteristic of central Germany, and had no fences to the rear. On the ground floor of our house was the combined music and dining room, the pantry, the kitchen and the maid's room; on the first floor two bedrooms, a room for my mother and the large studio for my father; on the top floor were my workroom and a guest room. The beautiful surroundings as well as the high quality of our neighbors enabled us to forget the somewhat unpleasant emanations of this provincial town. One wall of my father's almost square studio was black. He painted many of his big paintings here. The size of the room was probably an indirect cause of the new tack that Klee's art took at this period.

For years my mother had been wanting a telephone installed. My father had always been against it. In the new Dessau house my mother renewed her plea. Klee replied in his thickest Bernese dialect: "I won't have that devil's box in the house." My mother protested: "But Paul, as it is I have to run all the way into town for every little thing I need. . . ." My father, grudgingly: "All right, if you must, but stick it in the cellar." My mother succeeded in having the devil's box



First Sketch for the Ghost of a Genius. *Self-portrait*. Pen drawing, 1922.

installed not in the cellar, but in the pantry. But for years my father refused to answer the telephone; I can remember only a very few telephone conversations with him.

The beautiful environs of the town made up for the foul smells from the sugar refinery. Frequently my father would take walks of several miles with me out along Burgkühnauerallee. Or else we tramped to the old granary on the Elbe where I kept my canoe. We would paddle downstream a mile or two and then fight our way back upstream from pier to pier. In the springtime we would visit the gardens of the nearby Georgium, the ducal villa, with its artificial ruin, "the Seven Columns," at the entrance, and listen to the song of the nightingales. From the Dessau Schloss there was a hiker's path that led to the spacious zoo on the other side of the Mulde River. But my favorite outing was a trip to Oranienbaum and Wörlitz. The latter place was surrounded by an enchanting park full of lakes and watercourses that made the visitor forget the monotony of the surrounding Elbe flatlands. We strolled past Aeolian harps and exotic giant trees, across rickety footbridges, and took the ferries to the islands. Here Paul Klee was thoroughly in his element, and many of his pictures with plant or water subjects were the outcome of visits to this wonderful park.

Another time we went to see the labyrinth of the palace of Jessnitz. Even with a map it was not easy to reach the goal, a raised pavilion in the middle of the park. I had already got there and shouted directions to my father, who was still wandering about. It was easy to determine his position by the blue clouds from his pipe which puffed up above the tops of the hedges.

These "romantic" experiences made a pleasant contrast to the sober, practical development of the Dessau Bauhaus.

7. Italy

Because we moved into our new apartment so late, my father did not take his summer vacation until September, 1926. This time, therefore, we were all able to go to Italy together; ordinarily my mother would not come because she could not tolerate the summer heat there. We went first to Bern, where we always made the financial arrangements for our travels. Then we crossed the Simplon to Milan where we changed trains for Genoa, a city which had long been one of my father's favorites. After passing customs in the railroad station we established ourselves at the Hotel Royal Aquila, and my father knowledgeably took charge of guiding us about the city. Before we set out on a tour of the harbor, my father dickered with the gondolier over the fare, displaying a surprising amount of southern temperament. To me this was a completely new side of Father. He seemed transformed here; you could almost say that he seemed to be "at home." The reserve he always presented toward the outside world gave way to a natural openheartedness. Later he brought us to an excellent restaurant where he and the waiter went into consultation to work out a tasty menu of fish, meat and vegetables. Next day we rode along the Riviera to Leghorn, where we spent the night. Our hotel rooms were so huge that the beds were lost in them. We then boarded a small coastal steamer which was to take us to Elba. During the crossing to the penal island of Gorgona the glassy sea developed a gentle swell. My father and I stood at the bow of the ship watching the disporting dolphins, who swam races with us. While the ship sailed on past Capraia to the first town on Elba, Marciana, we ate spaghetti al sugo with the captain. At the very word spaghetti my father grinned and murmured to us "*Götterüsse, göll!*"* In Portoferraio we were met by Dr. Kaesbach. We crossed the bay in a sailboat and took rooms at the Pensione Ottone, a pension set in a great neglected garden and excellently run by a Roman named Signor Costantini. We spent more than three weeks on the island, swimming and taking walks. Exploring the island was a constant delight, for it was full of surprising and exciting things. Above all, there were snakes of all sizes, varieties and colors. They usually lay hidden under clumps of broom and would hiss softly, like cats, when we approached. One time my father had a highly unpleasant experience: returning from an outing one day, he was informed that the painter Arnthal had just arrived at the pension; and while he was receiving this bad news a black viper hissed menacingly behind him. Another time Dr. Kaesbach reported a plant that could spit its seed. We were enormously interested and insisted that Dr. Kaesbach show it to us. My father scrutinized the plant carefully and asked: "But how does it spit its seed?" Kaesbach replied: "You only have to touch it lightly," did so himself, and

* Swiss dialect: "Food for the gods, eh?" (Translators' note.)

his impeccable white trousers were instantly covered with dark-green spots. My father continued to relish this successful practical joke for a long time to come.

But aside from all the wonders of nature, one of the most remarkable features of the island was Padrone Costantini's culinary skill. Twice a day we assembled on the terrace, always full of suspense, and were presented with ever-changing delicacies. Along with the good food we had the red sparkling wine of the island. After the meal the rotund *padrone* would put in an appearance to receive the applause of the assembled diners.

We went by way of Piombino to Pisa, where my father explained the famous buildings to us, delivering little lectures like a trained guide. He was especially fond of the cathedral doors, Pisano's pulpit and the wonderful frescos of the Campo Santo. He would stand before these for a long time, lost in admiration.

From Pisa we went on to Florence. Again, Father knew the city intimately and could discourse at length on each and every sight. We stayed for ten days at the Pensione Nardini, opposite the Duomo. Stiller, the German consul, asked us out to the Böcklin villa in Fiesole. How strange it was to stand in Böcklin's studio which was exactly as he had left it, and seem to feel a greeting from other spheres.

Almost every day my father went to the Uffizi Galleries; it was hard for him to tear himself away from the masterpieces on display there. Evenings we would stroll through the Boboli Gardens, or up to San Miniato.

On all his early trips in Italy Klee had never touched the Adriatic coast. Without knowing Venice, he insisted that he detested it. He always used to say that the city had been built solely for the Austrians. In 1931, however, my wife and I went there, and our report was so enthusiastic that the following year Father at last ventured to visit the city. On October 9, 1932, he wrote to Lily about it:

Here is a city without automobiles, without cabs, without horses, without donkeys, without trees, with few dogs, many cats (but no beautiful ones). The reason is the permanent flooding of many streets and of the main street. How the houses feel about their footbath, they do not say. It is possible to walk about too, but that is a bewildering business; and the many bridges—many is underlined—provide humped obstacles. But these are the least. The chief obstacle is the lack of any clear view, so that orientation without a compass is impossible. In this tangle and this confinement there are a few—a few is almost an exaggeration—exceptions, chiefly the Grand Canal—but it is wet—and St. Mark's Place with the adjoining piazzetta and the quay, which for a short distance is broad and above all open to the view. In these circumstances I tramped about for hours today; and—since I am out of training—that is a great deal. But still highly novel and therefore attractive. St. Mark's Place is really a unique creation in stone. I can say no more than that after this first probe. I plan to go tomorrow to the Academy to look at painting.

On our trip in 1926, we went on from Florence via Bologna to Ravenna. This most un-Italian of cities with its gloriously colored Byzantine mosaics held a special magic for Klee. Perhaps his pointillist period, which began in 1930, was inspired by the mosaics of Ravenna. We drove in a horse-cab to the tomb of Theodoric and to the splendid church of San Appolinare in Clase, but we also drove through the pine woods to the sea, where we admired the many-colored sails, with their curious designs, that moved about on the wide channel. At the end of our travels we stopped over in Milan, and spent two days there looking at the cathedral, the palace and above all the Brera. There we concentrated our attention upon a painting by Mantegna: *Dead Christ*. Father exposted on the bold, original perspective of the body, as well as the delicate, transparent blue of this masterpiece. At the end of October, 1926, we went "home" to Dessau again by way of Bern.

The Big Dome. *Pen drawing, 1927.*



8. Later Years

In later years I always had a true and close friendship with my father. Very gravely he advised me, in signing my paintings, to use only "Felix" and never to sign them "Klee"; otherwise I might have great difficulties in life. When it came to my choice of profession—especially when I passed my Bauhaus journeyman's examination in cabinetwork in August, 1925—my father advised me against being a painter. "Painting is a very difficult profession," he said, "and people will always be making comparisons between my and your work, no matter how gifted you yourself may be." I have taken his words very much to heart and never exhibited any of my paintings. From my many visits to the theater, both up front and backstage, I had come to feel that the profession of opera director was the most tempting of all. When I stated, with just an undertone of question, that I would like very much to work in the theater, my father answered laconically: "By all means the theater." And to this day I do not regret having taken that course. For a year I was given very thorough private musical training in Weimar, studied more languages and art history, and at the end of October, 1926, began work as assistant director at the Friedrich Theater in Dessau. Every day my father wanted to hear a detailed account of the day's events, and he himself frequently went to the theater and returned with lively critical commentary on what he had seen.

My father liked writing letters, but sometimes he rebelled against the sheer physical effort of correspondence. On July 16, 1927, for example, he sent my mother the following jocose note:

I am writing with pencil because I have just done six letters and the pen has made me nervous. Pens can be used perfectly well in the left hand, but in the right they are a torment after a while. Try writing letters with your left hand some time and you will see what I mean.

Two years later, on October 3, 1929, he wrote in similar vein:

But now I must close because writing is beginning to irritate me. Not what I have to tell and say, but handling the pen with my idiotic right hand. My left lies passively on the paper and yet it could do it all so much better, only you wouldn't be able to read it.

In the summer of 1927, I went to Porquerolles, a long, narrow island south of Toulon. Karla Grosch, the dancer, who was a great friend of our family, traveled

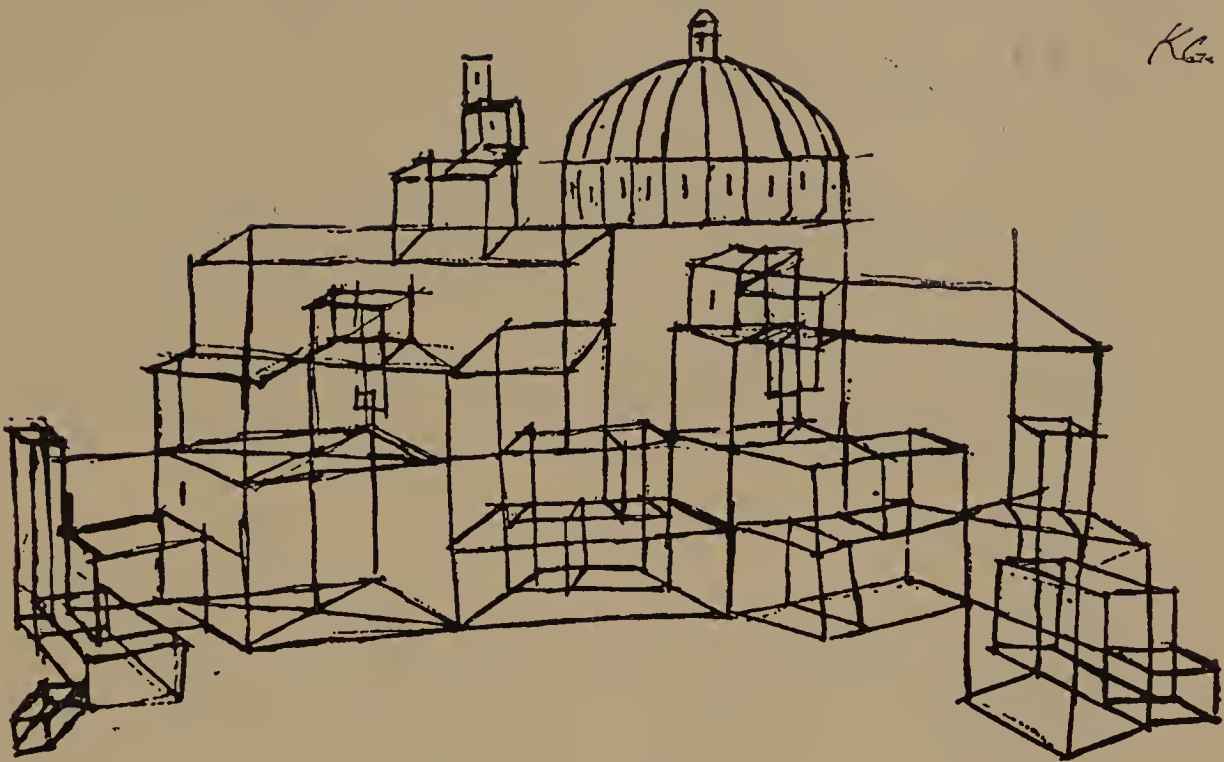
with me. At Porquerolles I located some excellent lodgings for my father, and I had no sooner sent word of these when to our surprise he arrived. We had a glorious two-week holiday on the island. Sometimes we tramped through the pine woods and broom, observed the cicadas and lizards, which we at first took to be snakes because of the sounds they made. We climbed to the highest point of the island where there was a signal station and marveled at the circumferential view of land and sea. We clandestinely picked ripe, sun-warmed figs, and took long and frequent swims. Evenings, the little square swarmed with busy crowds; a kind of roulette table with stakes of sous could keep us fascinated for hours. Sometimes when we young people went swimming, my father retreated to the cliffs, spread out a handkerchief and did drawings from nature to his heart's desire. Later, he traveled on alone to Corsica, which he told about with immense enthusiasm. He had an everlasting longing for the south, for the Mediterranean, and his contacts with these lands visibly transformed him; in spite of the intense heat he always came from such trips with his vitality and creativity greatly strengthened.

In the summer of 1928, Klee went to cooler Brittany for the sake of my mother, who was so sensitive to heat. The strange landscape, and in particular the stone monuments of prehistoric religion, immediately aroused his interest. On the other hand he did not take kindly to the cuisine of northern France.

Six months later, however, Klee again succumbed to the magical attraction of the south. This time he went much farther: to Egypt. A wish he had cherished for many years—actually since his visit to Kairouan—was at last fulfilled. The trip began at the end of December, 1928, and he returned in the middle of January, overbrimming with all he had seen and experienced. Along with matters of importance he had a great many amusing anecdotes to tell. I asked him how he had managed to communicate, since he did not know English. His reply was: "In *Bärndütsch*" (Bernese German). And that was actually so, for many of the Cook's hotels were staffed by Swiss. His arrival in Alexandria must have been extremely funny. After he passed customs at the pier, he wanted to take a cab to the railroad station. But he had first to reassemble his baggage; it had been distributed among seven cabs, with every cabby hoping thereby to capture the fare. He could tell us endless stories of Cairo, describing the museums and the city, and how he had lost his way for hours in the labyrinth of the streets.

Father had gone on tours of the pyramids and the Sphinx, and later taken a nocturnal trip to Aswân and the royal graves. The city swarmed with beggars. Father gave a coin to a begging boy, who thereupon told him an involved story in incomprehensible sibilants. Father did a wonderful dramatization of the incident.

Klee



To reach the tombs of the pharaohs he had to ride on a donkey from his hotel. For a while all went well, since the driver walked alongside and kept an eye on his beast. But then the donkey scented a female and started to gallop. The driver was unable to keep up. Father took this emergency, like so many others, in his stride: "A lucky thing donkeys have such long ears; I was able to hold on tight to them."

During this Egyptian trip, Klee worked very little, perhaps not at all. He merely stored up impressions. Later on, we constantly recognized themes in his work that dealt directly or indirectly with the landscape and the population of Egypt.

In the summer of 1929, coming from Spain, I arrived in the French Basque country. I got in touch with my parents and found a pension for the three of us, the Villa Louisiana, in Bidart, near Biarritz. The temperate, rather rainy climate of the Basses-Pyrénées was just to my mother's liking. Since bathing in the pounding surf was not exactly to be recommended, we mostly spent our time on outings in the magnificent country on both the French and Spanish sides of the border. Later the Kandinskis came to the vicinity, and we had many jolly hours together.

In those days, when I was just starting out on my career, my father was always deeply concerned about my "little" problems. After our Basque holiday I departed, in August, 1929, for a new position with the Breslau Municipal Theater. On December 18, 1929, my father's fiftieth birthday was exuberantly celebrated in Dessau. Writing to a friend of the family, Father reported:

. . . It was a crazy day. Among other things, an airplane dropped presents for me; our flat roof gave way, and the gifts fell right into the center of the studio. It certainly was a fine surprise . . .

A week after this momentous event, my father wrote to me, combining his Christmas greetings with a postbirthday note:

Dessau

December 26, 1929

Dear Felix,

You have no doubt heard about the excitement of the past week, so I don't suppose I have to describe all that for you. The fact is, I would find it hard to sum up my highly contradictory feelings about this fiftieth birthday.

Now things have quieted down again. Christmas Eve, ordinarily a pretty bustling time, seemed peaceful and contemplative after all that had gone before, and I sang to myself the well-known Christmas melody with a new text which harmonized with my state of gentle convalescence. Now I have forgotten the words again. Because fresh courage has already returned.

The new Klee book has arrived, and I must bestir myself all the more; one has no right to stand still.

Your very nice gifts have given me great pleasure. Mozart perfected himself, and as a painter you too are softly proceeding along the path you set out on so early. The grays on the sketch look good embedded between black and white, and the few vigorous notes of color add a beneficial tension. The sketch for Mother is beautiful too. . . .

Many thanks, then; enjoy yourself, so that the festive season is more than a formula—and because the days are growing longer again.

Affectionately,

Your Father

At the Breslau Theater in September, 1929, I met the singer Efrossina Gréschowa, my future wife. Paul Klee was cordial and welcoming toward his prospective

daughter-in-law, although he himself had been treated so shabbily by his own father-in-law. His attitude emerges clearly from a birthday letter to her:

Dessau

January 27, 1931

Dear Fräulein Gréschowa,

For your birthday I wish you another happy year and hope that it may bring you everything you would like to have. If I were a magician, not just an artist, I would make all sorts of wonderful things jump out of the hat for you. But even without them you will remain, as I feel you are, a happy person, despite the fact that all the materials for felicity are not being spilled at your feet all at once. Even a magician, if he were a kindly magician, would save a few things in the hat for future years.

With friendly greetings,

Yours,

Klee

My father had the reputation of seldom writing letters. And yet I discover today, when I look over all the written material he left behind, that he was after all a diligent correspondent. Perhaps there are not so many letters to friends and associates—I would estimate the number of those at about three hundred, most of which are in the hands of others and some of which are even bought and sold. But the family letters are very numerous. Our family files hold 773 cards and 813 letters of Father's, written to his mother, to Hans, Mathilde, Lily, my wife and myself.

9. The Düsseldorf Academy of Art

The year 1930 was a crucial one for Klee. This was the year that Dr. Kaesbach, the Director of the Düsseldorf Academy of Art, offered him the post of professor there. Klee was delighted, for he had for some time been longing for greater scope for teaching than the Bauhaus permitted. The courses there had become somewhat stultified and the overtones of doctrinaire politics oppressive. In Düsseldorf, moreover, Klee could build up a class of promising pupils who would not change from semester to semester. He also found the intellectual and physical climate of Düsseldorf more congenial. The soft, diffuse light which spoke of the closeness of the ocean, and the vitality of the Rhenish inhabitants, stimulated his creative instinct. The fine studio in the Academy was also a great joy to him. Above all, however, his new program of alternate two weeks in Dessau and Düsseldorf heightened his zest for getting back to the works he had on hand in the other city, and at the same time enabled him to take a more objective view of them. On April 30, 1930, he wrote to my mother from Dessau concerning his work:

I have now postponed classes a little longer, exaggerating some actual twinges of rheumatism into a deep-seated arthritis. The newly arranged studio is beginning to function; I am working more peacefully and have more room. It's also a good thing that the many larger unfinished works are downstairs. Then they don't keep chattering away at me. Though I suppose there is more of a chance that not knowing which work I ought to go on with, I do nothing at all. For one cannot split oneself entirely, after all. If only one could!

And on September 14, 1930, he wrote to my mother about their coming anniversary in a humorous vein:

I have been thinking of our anniversary, but do not know quite how to express myself. I had drafted a telegram: "I congratulate you on your husband, whom you have managed to put up with for almost twenty-five years." But that sounded silly. Then I tried another tack: "I congratulate you on my wife . . ." Then: "I congratulate myself . . ." And that seemed to me the most preposterous of all the various drafts. So I have given up.

The political clouds were already gathering at this time. On September 21, 1930, Paul Klee wrote to his wife about them:

Of course one can only shake one's head over the elections, but pessimism isn't my style. The last Reichstag was better, and yet the government could not be run with it; perhaps it will turn out paradoxically that such an impossible Reichstag survives the better because of temporary groupings. Jews, of course, are especially anxious now. But let us not be even more amateurish in our conclusions than the professional politicians. Everything always turns out differently from what we think, and if things get bad France and England are ready to put in a word and never mind noninterference in internal affairs; internal matters have far too great external effects when appetites are involved.

On January 26, 1931, Klee sent birthday greetings to his sister Mathilde. In this letter, too, he touched on the political crisis:

When our old lord of hosts—now at Doorn—sat upon his throone, I was well off and could never be in such a miserable plight as to be late with, say, birthday wishes for you. But now times are a great deal worse; I hear it said so often that I almost believe it; but they aren't yet so bad as to make old family affection die out. . . .

On October 26, 1931, he wrote to Lily from Düsseldorf about the conditions at the museum there:

The art museum (Düsseldorf) is thoroughly mediocre in relation to size. How miserably most painters paint—and I'm far from satisfied with myself; who really paints well? You can count them off on your fingers. . . .

In August, 1931, I was appointed stage manager for opera at the Basel Municipal Theater, under the direction of Dr. Oskar Wälterlin. On April 12, 1932, Efrossina Gréschowa and I were married there. My parents insisted on being present at the wedding, in spite of the long journey it meant for both of them—for my mother was in Dessau, my father in Düsseldorf at the time. On that day six couples were given a joint wedding in the courtyard of the cathedral. The elderly registrar, who suffered from a slight stammer, saved himself considerable trouble by this mass ceremony. My father was in brilliant humor and regarded the odd spectacle of collective marriage with a rather mocking smile. Afterward we strolled to the terrace overlooking the Rhine and had a good laugh at the involuntary comedy of the affair; then we walked to the zoo and afterward to the wedding dinner in the Singerhaus. In the evening we all went to *Aïda*. I am deliberately going into such detail about this family occasion in order to show with what kindness, affection and stamina

my father took part in it all. Perhaps he was thinking a little sadly of his own wedding in Bern, which he had once described very humorously in his diary. As so often before, Klee had the knack of penetrating the essence of every experience that came his way.

In the fall of 1932, my wife and I moved to Düsseldorf where I had been appointed stage manager at the Stadttheater. We were very happy to have my father coming to the same city for alternate fortnights. Whenever he was in Düsseldorf, we saw each other daily, either at meals at our house, or at his studio, or at performances of the opera, which Klee especially appreciated for its high quality. He kept Mother informed of the progress of his work. Thus on February 10, 1932, he wrote:

I have framed everything in stock very handsomely. The pictures smiled a bit in the wisps of sunshine. Also found lots of letters waiting, which was funfine. Poetry would be so so nice, so easy—if you believed in it.

On March 11, 1932, he wrote to Mother:

At the moment I'm less concerned with completing pictures than with trying out various new grounds. That has brought me back to glazes. Probably I shall tie that up with so-called pointillism. For the present I'm not doing so. My grounds at present tend to have a great deal of sand in them, but serviceably worked out—in my "laboratory" for painting technique.

And on April 17, 1932:

The stillness of the palace is an uncanny sotto voce. I painted a landscape, something like the view from the desert hills of the Valley of the Kings down into the cultivated land. The polyphony between ground and atmosphere is kept as relaxed as possible. Next on the agenda is an attempt to shape the principle of volume directly, cloudy and somber in hue, but I suppose there's no help for it. The other vein won't stop because of it.

In Düsseldorf Paul Klee lived in a furnished room on Mozartstrasse; a few years ago the place was marked with a small memorial plaque. Later he moved to Goltsteinstrasse. In those increasingly restive times he would have been only too glad to set up permanent headquarters in Düsseldorf, but with the best will in the world he could not find an apartment that suited him. He fixed up a little cooking niche in his studio where, with the aid of two alcohol stoves, he prepared the most

marvelous food. One of his specialities was a variation on risotto: barley with tomatoes, which he called "barlotto." Before he went to the Academy in the morning, he made a detour to the nearby market to buy vegetables, greens, fruits, spices, fish and above all tasty English shoulder of mutton. After dinner he would have Turkish coffee, which he was extremely fond of; he would spoon out the last drops when he was finished. The cabbage-and-potato smells of the nearby students' mess contrasted sharply with his own cuisine, and now and then these obnoxious odors found their way through the French doors of his studio.

At one time Zschokke, the Swiss sculptor who was also connected with the Academy, did a portrait sculpture of Klee. Klee thought the likeness very good, but in order to add something of his own to it, he began applying paint to the sculpture. It turned out rather like the Punch figure which he had done as a self-portrait in 1922.

The coming to power of the Nazis on January 31, 1933, was soon to prove fateful for the whole of German culture. At first my father refused to be upset. He went on working steadily as though nothing had happened. On February 5, 1933, he wrote to Mother about it:

Not since my return from Venice have I worked the way I have been doing these past two weeks. The number of paintings alone doesn't tell the story, but the integrity and joy in the work that come every day for several hours. Once again I've succeeded in banishing all skepticism from this process. That liberates a great deal that might have turned into ballast. Everything has been thrown overboard. There are a few drawings which explicitly deal with throwing out ballast, relatively reactive pieces, but a long way from my drastically reactive manner of before; rather, even as such their character is sublimated, or it may be, refined. Imponderable and So to Speak are probably the chief examples of that.

As was his custom after every semester, Klee arranged a show of his pupils' work in the halls of the Academy. This was 1933 and the atmosphere of the times was tense. The already purged control commission were staggered at finding only representational studies and betrayed themselves by exclaiming: "If we had only known!" This meant that Klee's dismissal had already been decided upon; only the Nazi authorities unexpectedly found that they could not object to the students' work. In March, 1933, the swastika flag was run up over the Academy. From that time on my father stayed away from his beloved studio. Back in Dessau the Storm Troopers came and subjected our house to a humiliating search; they stole things, turned everything upside down, and what was far worse, confiscated our entire correspondence. For safety's sake Klee vanished to Switzerland for a number of

weeks, with the priceless remark: "They say the Bernese are slow-moving, but I'd like to see them catch up with this one." My dauntless mother went to SA headquarters with a van and made the Storm Troopers return the papers, after which she proclaimed her triumph over "the blockheads" to all and sundry.

On May 1, the long-prepared removal from Dessau to Düsseldorf, Heinrichstrasse 63, took place. Once the moving was over, Klee withdrew into his home like a mole; he was very seldom seen going out. For economy's sake, my wife and I moved into the attic apartment of the same house. We lived contentedly with the maid and the white Persian tomcat Bimbo in this voluntary exile. Around this time came the sad news of the death of our dear friend Karla Grosch, who had fled from the Nazis to Tel Aviv. My mother often used to cry out in despair: "When are the French coming across the Rhine to free us from this plague!" What evil the world could have been spared if only they had!

As was so often the case in difficult times Father worked as if obsessed. He did not seem hampered by the cramped space in which he had to work. His drawings of this period are unique: in them we see in its most perfect form that world which is wholly his own, with no intrusion of reality. The director of the Academy, Dr. Kaesbach, had also been dismissed and had moved to the German side of Lake Constance, where he wanted to found a kind of artists' colony. Tempting as this project was to Klee, my mother resolutely rejected it. The Germans had treated us too outrageously and Mother wished to have nothing more to do with them. As far as she was concerned, there was only one possible place to live: Switzerland. What was more logical than that she and Father should go to Bern? Events proved her right, for soon afterwards the "degenerate" painters were forbidden to paint, and with each passing month exit from Germany became more difficult. At last, shortly before Christmas, the moving was undertaken. My mother sold a great deal of furniture; in May two furniture vans had been needed to transport the household goods; now only one sufficed. My father wrote to me at Ulm, where I had been working as a stage manager since October, in a letter from Düsseldorf dated December 22, 1933:

The furniture is gone now. Tomorrow night I shall most likely be leaving this place. Then come the lovely Christmas days, with bells ringing in every blockhead's head. I have grown somewhat older these past few weeks. But I won't let my gall rise, or at any rate I'll spike the gall with humor. That's easy for men. In such cases women generally resort to tears. . . .

10. Switzerland

I have heard that my grandparents gave my parents a rather chilly reception. My mother, whom the painful experiences of the last year had made extremely sensitive, imagined she saw a glint of triumph in Hans Klee's eyes. My parents hastily found a furnished apartment for themselves on Kollerweg, and in the spring of 1934 moved into a three-room apartment of their own at Kistlerweg 6. Here, for the time being, they had to start from the beginning again. My father devoted himself to cooking and painting, my mother to the remainder of the housework and piano playing. The three rooms were divided into bedroom, music room and studio, the spacious kitchen being used for meals. One floor higher there was another room where they could put up guests. A great many of my father's pictures were stored in this large room, and it was probably an exalting feeling for visitors to be lodged alongside of so many masterpieces. Father managed to work very well in his improvised studio. Nothing disturbed his peace, and he was able to concentrate entirely on his work. He felt so very well there that he did not leave Switzerland again to the day of his death. One day he had to swallow his pride and go to the nearby German Embassy to have his expired passport renewed. He only did so, however, for the sake of the Swiss police authorities, with their love of order. Come what may, he would never have returned to Hitler Germany.

Klee's works during the first two years back in Switzerland—1934 and 1935—show a continuous development. At first this was a bit halting, for it took some time before Father was properly acclimated, of course. But the intense greenness of the subalpine countryside around Bern could no longer disturb him the way it had thirty years before. His colors blossomed out and became stronger; a new style emerged which was different from the rigidity of the constructivistic Bauhaus period and different, too, from the more relaxed and delicate pointillist Düsseldorf period.

This highly productive spell was abruptly interrupted by illness in 1936. First Father came down with the measles. This innocuous children's disease brought in its train a succession of illnesses from which he never again entirely recovered. This ailment of Father's could not be exactly diagnosed; perhaps it was a kind of occupational disease; perhaps the colors with which he customarily experimented had deleterious effects upon his health. Now he often had difficulty eating; his esophagus had lost its elasticity and would no longer move solid food down to his stomach. Although this condition had its ups and downs, my father must have suffered unspeakably for almost five years, from the beginning of the disease to his death. But no word of complaint ever crossed his lips. Nevertheless, Klee sensed quite clearly

that his health was not really improving, and that he had only a limited time to live. On December 29, 1939, he expressed this feeling to me in the following lines:

. . . what a temptation it is to take up classical philology again and start with the hetaerae letters. But there is no time at my disposal for yielding to such temptation, and I rest content with an occasional trial flight. For there is not even enough time left to me for my main business. Productivity is accelerating in range and at a highly accelerated tempo; I can no longer entirely keep up with these children

Who Is Guilty? Pen drawing, 1928.



of mine. They run away with me. There is a certain adaptation taking place, in that drawings preponderate. Twelve hundred items in 1939 is really something of a record performance.

This new creative upsurge began in 1937, and was truly a surprise to all of us. Grohmann divides this last creative period into the following categories: humor of the late years, late pastels, symbol pictures with thin, heavy and outlined bars, large panels, conceptual pictures, tragic-demonic and intimations of death, the series of angels, and requiem.

The drawing became more forceful, the format larger, and the colors more than ever assumed a sovereign importance. Along with enlarging his artistic range, Klee had also entered upon a period of new technique. He experimented with novel types of grounds, sometimes using newspaper, burlap, muslin, coarse plywood. He was more than ever inclined to grind his own colors. This he did according to a

secret formula; he would stir up the pigments and bind them with casein or egg emulsion or oil. He called these new paints "paste colors" and he would mix them in ever-new combinations upon the painting itself. Many times he could not rest content with a painting. He tinkered with the painting *Botanical Theater* for ten years. The *Submarine Garden* sat about his studio for several years until he finally completed it by adding a small red "proto-fish" to this symphony in blue-greens. The same thing happened to *Bridge Arches Walking Away* which Klee redid a year later as *Revolution of the Viaduct*. I happened to have photographed the first version, so we can compare the two and decide whether the second version is an improvement on the first. I myself feel that my father was right; the painting became more unitary, concentrated and "better."

How in addition to this intensified work my father still found time to mount the pictures, frame them, letter them, mount the water colors and the innumerable drawings on cardboard and keep account of them all with scrupulous exactitude in his *œuvre* catalogue, look after his favorite cat, Bimbo, read books, receive visits, listen to music, go on small trips and even write letters, remains a mystery to me. The last three years of his life must be compared to the eruption of a volcano.

His doctor's advice to stop smoking and give up playing the violin was very hard on him. During his early days in Bern he was only too happy to take up his beloved fiddle, as he had done in earlier years. But he accepted these strictures without a word. I append some extracts from his letters of this period, which give a vivid account of his activities.

On November 27, 1937, he wrote to Mother:

In Ascona I did pastel drawings to my heart's delight. I am doing some more, along with mounting and keeping the accounts.

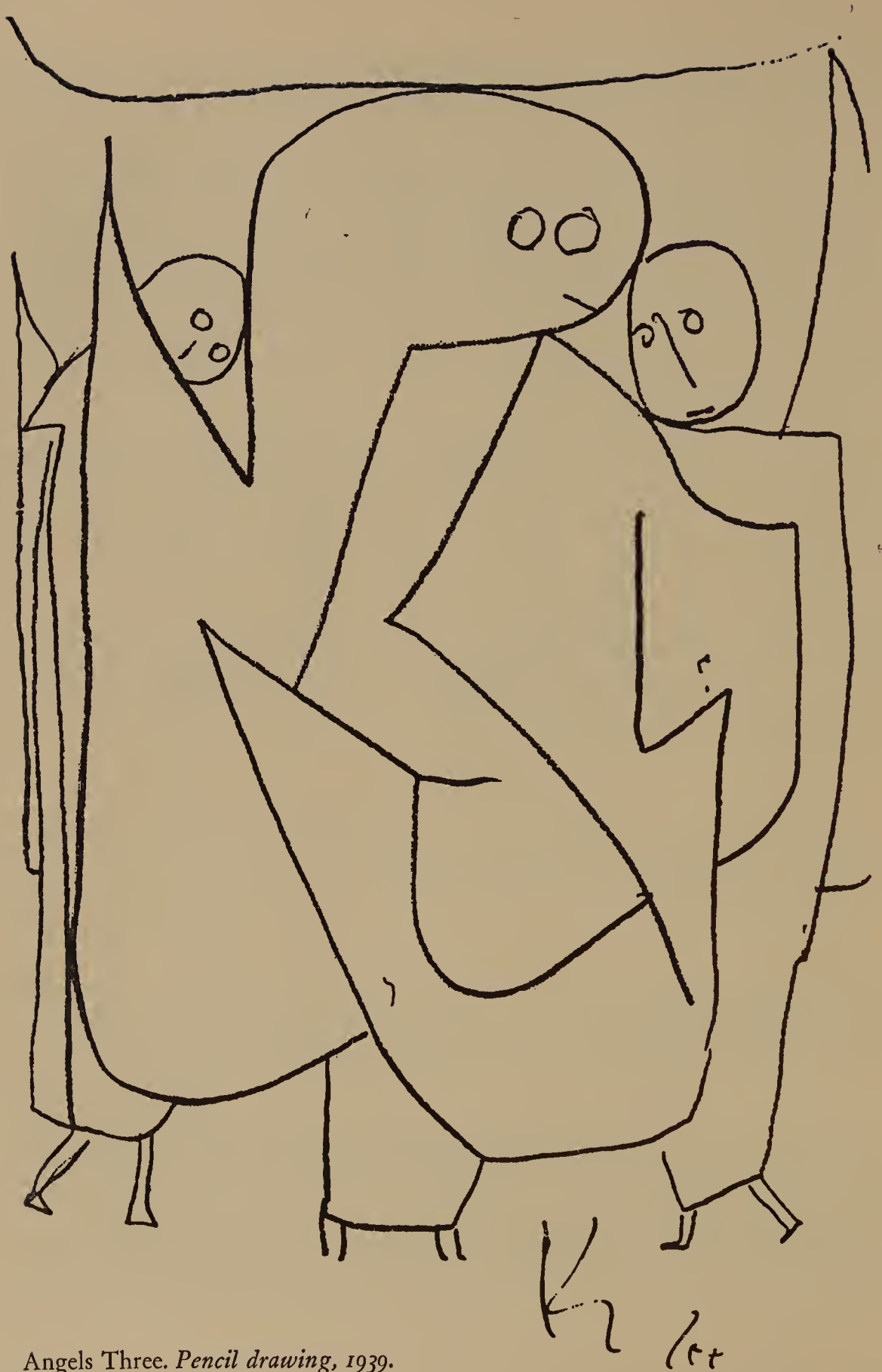
On May 2, 1939:

They were not twelve new pictures; rather, they were already lying in wait, ready to be stretched and done.

On Ascension Day, 1939:

I am also gradually working my way through Molière. In the later plays you find scenes that are constructed in a wholly abstract manner; I particularly like those. And in reading I suppose liking is enough.

At the same time I am producing, especially in monotone, more and more and ever-fresh combinations, too. A new series has come into being which once again



Angels Three. Pencil drawing, 1939.

looks more abstract and yet comes close enough to the figure—or face—I have hitherto expressed so that it can best be called “Approximation.”

The next larger picture is still waiting in the wings. . . . When will it make its entrance?

On May 23, 1939:

Riding trains is not my idea of fun, and the effort involved is altogether disproportionate to what can be had from a few hours' visit. Normally, yes, but you forget that nowadays I must be counted among the not-healthy, although in general I try to ignore that.

And at the end of May, 1939:

The consequence of this relative tranquillity was that a picture was born unto me and baptized “Fama!” I think it is good; fairly large. On a piece of canvas that is now relieved of its function as a wind screen by the door.

Today I painted again, but instead of finishing the painting, I covered it up with a new ground. That happens sometimes even now, to keep us from arrogance.

Klee lived to receive the many tributes that came to him on his sixtieth birthday, December 18, 1939. Hosts of family friends and admirers sent him congratulations, and he insisted on reciprocating with brief cards of thanks. A number of fine exhibitions also took place on this occasion, which made it plain that the homage Father so well deserved was being paid to him in more than local spheres.

II. Struggle for Swiss Citizenship

The story of my father's request for Swiss citizenship gave rise to many rumors. It became something of a *cause célèbre*, and was much discussed in the newspapers. My father had been born in Switzerland, and his mother was of Swiss nationality. He had gone to school in Bern, and spent all his early years in Switzerland. Nevertheless he had to follow the same procedures as any foreigner when he returned to Bern in 1933 after his long stay abroad. Thus, it was several years before he received his residence permit; only after this was he able to apply to the authorities for citizenship. For this purpose he wrote a brief "biography" in January, 1940:

I was born on December 18, 1879 in Münchenbuchsee. My father was a music teacher at the cantonal teachers college of Hofwil; my mother was Swiss. When I entered school in the spring of 1886, we lived on Länggasse in Bern. I attended the first four classes of the primary school in that city. Then my parents sent me to the municipal Progymnasium; I stayed there through the fourth and last class and then attended the school of literature in the same institution. My general education was concluded with the cantonal examination, which I passed in the autumn of 1898.

I was now qualified, thanks to my cantonal certificate, to enter any profession. However I decided to study painting and devote my life to art, however hazardous such a career might be. Such studies were best undertaken in those days—as to some extent they still are today—abroad. The choice lay only between Paris and Germany. Emotionally, Germany appealed to me more.

And so I set out for the Bavarian metropolis. At the Academy of Art they recommended that I first attend Knirr's preparatory school. There I practiced drawing and painting, and subsequently entered Franz Stuck's class at the Academy. After three years of study in Munich, I put in a further year of study and travel in Italy, chiefly in Rome. My next task was to engage in some years of quiet work employing the skills I had acquired, and to make progress in my art. Bern, the home of my youth, seemed to me the ideal place for such labors and I still can point to the fruits of this stay: the etchings I did in 1905 and 1906, which even at that time attracted a certain amount of attention.

I had formed many ties in Munich, and one of these led to marriage with my present wife. The fact that she could practice her profession in Munich was one of the important reasons for my returning there for the second time in the autumn of 1908. As an artist I was slowly achieving recognition, and every step forward in Munich was of importance, for the city was then the center of the art world,

I remained a resident of Munich until 1920, except for an interruption of three years during the World War, when I served on garrison duty in Landshut, Schleissheim and Gersthofen. All through this period my ties with Bern remained unbroken; every year I spent two or three weeks at my parents' home there, during vacation.

In 1920 came my appointment to the staff of the Bauhaus in Weimar. I taught there until that institution moved to Dessau in 1926. Finally, in 1930, I was asked to accept an appointment to conduct a course in painting at the Prussian Academy of Art in Düsseldorf. This offer coincided with my own desire to confine my teaching entirely to my own field. I therefore accepted and was associated with the Academy from 1931 to 1933.

The political changes in Germany affected the field of graphic art, both curbing academic freedom and cutting off all outlets for creative work in the arts. Since my reputation as a painter had in the course of time become international and even intercontinental, I felt that I was in a position to give up teaching and make my livelihood as a free-lance painter.

The question of where to live henceforth was not in doubt. My close ties with Bern had never been broken; I felt keenly drawn to the city that is really my home. I have been living here ever since, and my sole remaining wish is to be a citizen of this city.

Bern, January 7, 1940

Paul Klee

Since the Second World War was already raging, the naturalization proceedings went slowly. It was May, 1940, before my father was called to Bern to sign the necessary papers; but by then he was in a sanatorium in Ticino and could not travel. Consequently Paul Klee remained a German citizen to the end of his life.

12. Death

He continued to work for the first four months of 1940 with undiminished intensity. Early in May, already gravely weakened, he entered the Victoria sanatorium in Orselina-Locarno. His last postcard to my mother, dated May 11, reads as follows:

Dear Lily,

The trip was quite tolerable, but by the time I reached Bellinzona I was very glad for the car; besides, it was extremely sultry there. I enjoyed the enchanting succession of spring scenes on the northern slopes. Ticino is not very gay now. I was well received here at the sanatorium and am gradually making myself at home. The diet, I imagine, is going to do me some good; the difficulty is more one of the mechanism of swallowing, and what will suit me is discussed before every meal, day after day. This morning, after spending a fairly good night, the day's routine began again. Nurse right there to ask about food in the morning. First breakfast already lies behind me. Washing too. The doctor drops in every so often and prescribes some new routines. Now I am busy with the postcard. Yesterday that would have been too much for me. But am wondering when it will arrive. Well, good-by for now and enjoy the rest.

Love,

Paul

Victoria Sanatorium, Orselina-Locarno, Whitsaturday.

The very first reports from my father were not exactly encouraging, so that my mother boarded the train with Bimbo the cat and joined Father at the sanatorium. His physical decline could no longer be checked, and my mother lived in fear from day to day. Until the last, Father was in full possession of his intellectual powers. On the morning of June 29, he passed peacefully in his sleep into another world. His heart had been unable to stand the severe strains of the past few years. Friends took my mother back to Bern. The cremation took place, with very few persons attending, at the crematorium in Lugano. At the last minute I myself managed, despite great difficulties, to travel from Wilhelmshaven to Bern and arrive in time for the funeral. Relatives and friends took their leave of Paul Klee in the chapel of the Bürgerspital in Bern, on July 2, 1940. Two Mozart adagios were played at the beginning and end of the funeral; the speakers were Pastor Schädelin; Dr. Hans Bloesch, a friend of my father's youth; and Dr. Georg Schmidt of Basel. In the fall of 1940 a small memorial volume containing the two principal addresses was published by Benteli Verlag. Here are extracts from the two speeches; the first is by Dr. Bloesch:

Lily. *Water color, 1906.*





(Above) *Klee's studio in the Bauhaus, Weimar, 1925. Photo by Paul Klee. (Below) Paul Klee and Alfred Kubin (right) in Dessau, 1928.*





(Above) *Felix, Paul
and Mathilde Klee in
Weimar, 1922. (Below)
Klee's home in Wei-
mar, am Horn 53
(second floor), 1924.*



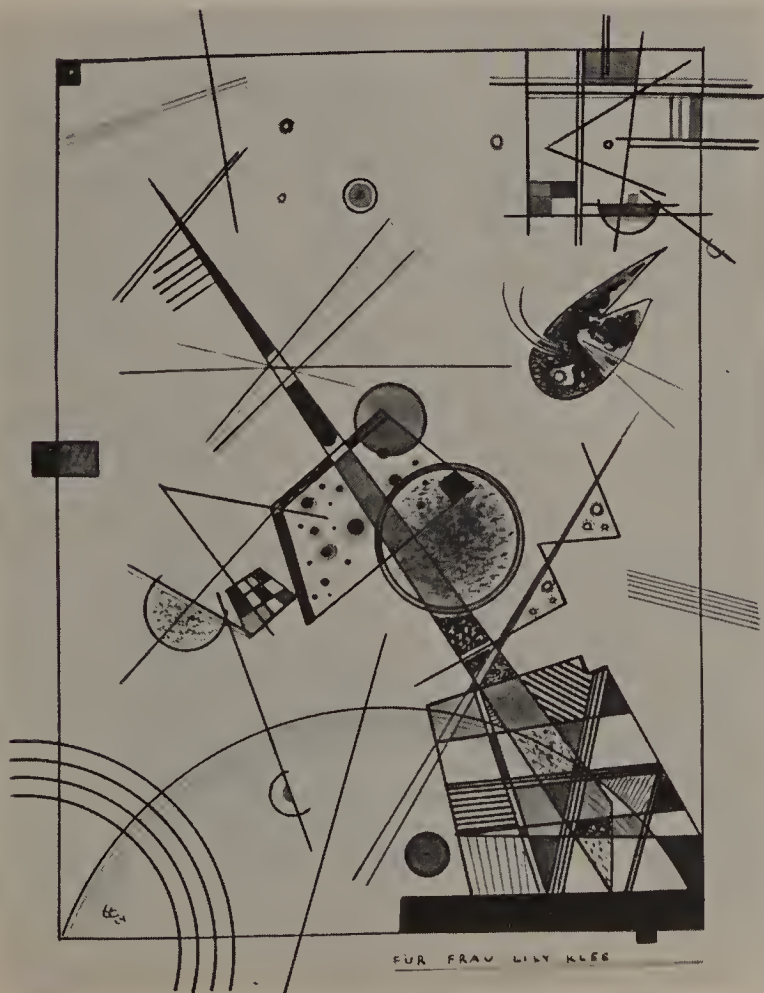
Paul Klee's studio, Stresemannallee 7, Dessau, 1926.



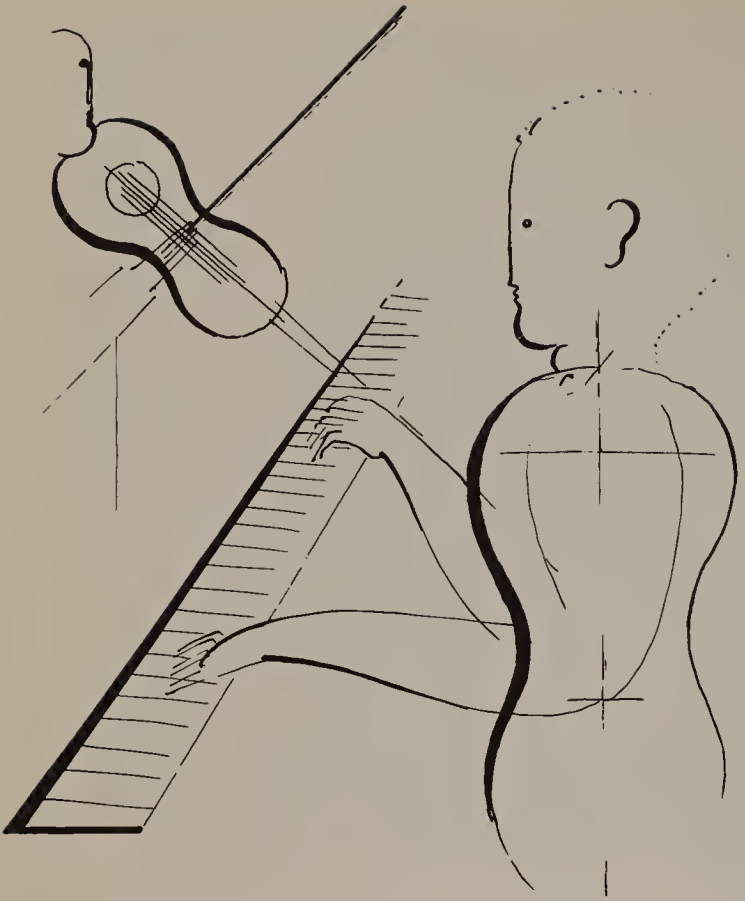


altdeutsches Paar.

Kubin



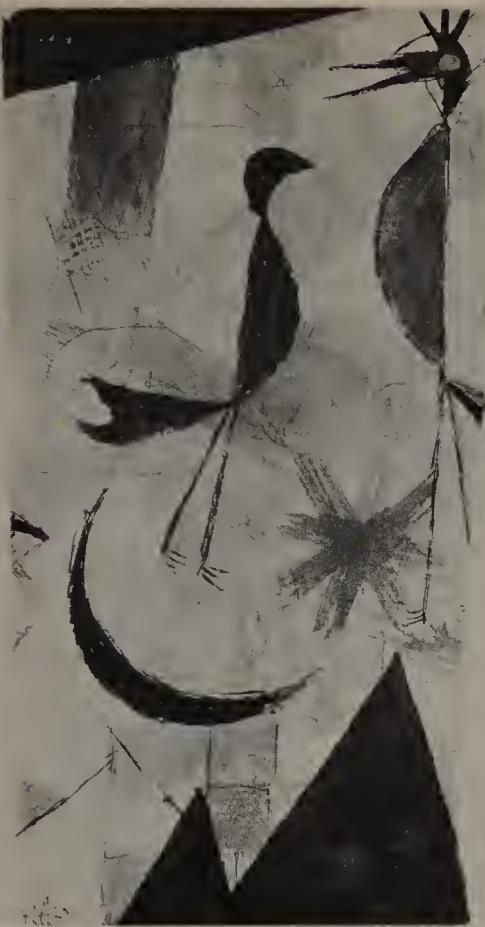
From Lily Klee's
guestbook. (Above)
Alfred Kubin: Medi-
eval German Couple.
Water-colored draw-
ing, 1931. (Below)
Vasili Kandinski:
Composition. Water-
colored drawing, 1924.



From Lily Klee's guest-book. (Above) Oskar Schlemmer: Duet for Piano and Violin. Water-colored drawing, 1924. (Below) Lyonel Feininger: Sailboat. Water color, 1926.



Feininger



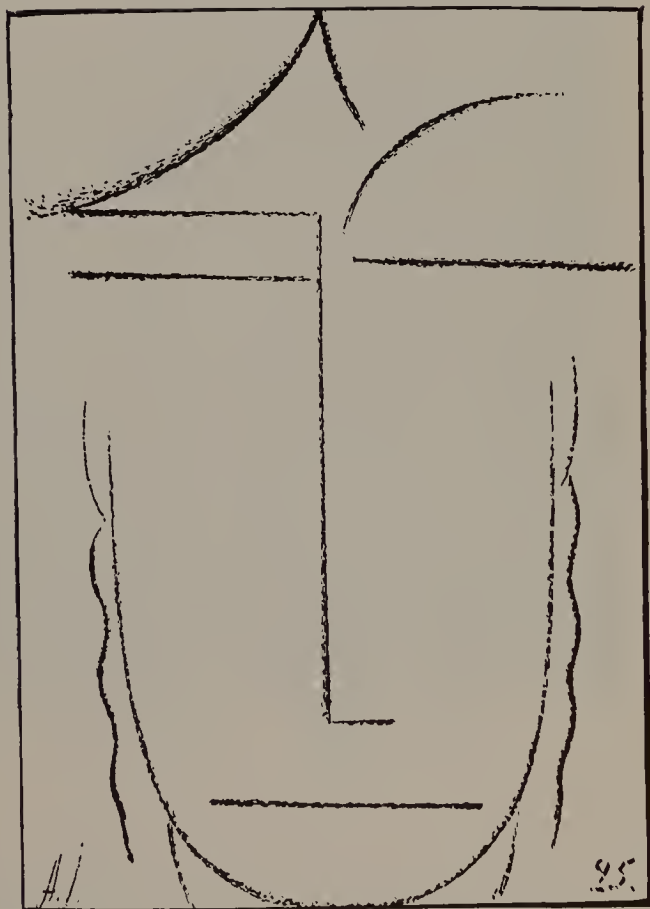
From Lily Klee's
 guestbook. (Above,
 left) Paul Klee: En-
 counter of Birds.

Water color, 1918.

(Above, right) George
 Grosz: Old Student.

Water-colored draw-
 ing, 1929. (Below)

Alexei von Yavlenski:
 Head. India-ink draw-
 ing, 1925.





Paul and Lily Klee in the garden of the Sonnmatt resort hotel near Lucerne, 1930.

nun bei, ich bin ganz gut
gerüstet aber in Bellinzona war
ich dann sehr wohl über das Auto, geht
war es gerade dort sehr schön. Auf
der Nordseite gewiss ich die berühmten
Frühlingsbilder, Tessin ist nicht so
heiter. Hier in Koblenz gab es immer
richtig ich mich ultramäßig händeln ein.
Mit der Zeit geht es wahrscheinlich ganz
gut, es kommt ja mehr auf die Mechanik
des Schlockens an bei Kordell und
das wird jederzeit besprochen, Tag
für Tag. Heute Vormittag noch
abendlich verbrachter Nacht hat der
Tagwerk wieder begonnen. Die Abgeord-
nete für. Essen was schon da. 1. Frühl-
stück liegt hinter mir. Waschen auch.
Der Arzt kommt dann auch gelegent-
lich und wird neue Aufgaben stellen.
Jetzt bin ich mit der Postkarte beschäftigt
gestern wäre das zu viel gewesen.
Wann die aber ankomen wird ???
Nun lebst wohl und gewissset die
Schonung hast hast ~~...~~ &

A great artist has departed from us, a towering artistic personality, the influence of whose creative work has spread in ever-widening circles, and will continue to do so. His influence, however, will not take the form of a school and a band of disciples, for Paul Klee's art is unique, inimitable, as his personality, whose reflection his works of art were, was unique.

After passing his cantonal examinations Paul Klee went to Munich where he studied under the painters Knirr and Stuck. He wanted to provide himself with the technical equipment that would enable him to realize a dream: to be able to express as a painter the burning spirit within him that strove toward the light. He did not know how that was to be done, but he knew only that it could not be done along the traditional lines laid down for him by his teachers.

Long years of seeking and doubting followed. The route to an unexplored country was not easy to find. But one thing he did find fairly soon: his wife, a greatly gifted pianist and a dear companion. Her selfless devotion and her faith in the future of the unknown painter made possible for him his slow maturing and triumphant rise. Appreciation of his work grew. In Weimar, Dessau and Düsseldorf he taught at the Bauhaus and the Academy, until the political upheaval in Germany swept the ground from under his feet, as it did to all innovators in the arts.

He returned to us, to the city of his youth, here quietly to continue his work. There was no need for him to become acclimated here, for he felt at home. And he carried within himself the world from which his art drew its nourishment. The external world was of no account to him. The change in his personal circumstances did not affect him. Whether in his own beautiful home or in modest rented rooms, he remained the same undemanding, kindly, completely aristocratic person, with that quiet friendliness and ironic humor which had been his from the beginning.

Paul Klee gave much to many human beings, and gratitude for all he gave accompanies him to the grave. So many and various were the contributions he made to art that we today cannot yet begin to estimate their importance and ultimate effects. . . .

From the speech of Dr. Georg Schmidt:

Softly, gently, a single individual among the thousand who die amidst the thunders of war in these days, the gentlest and most unique of present-day artists has gone from us.

Those who were close to him had long feared for his precious life. It had been a life of incomparably rich harvests, but during this very past year a harvest matured which seemed to add something entirely new to all that he had already reaped. Those who had the sad duty of watching over his failing health are likely to see in the apparently more vigorous tone of these late works a triumph of the creative will over the physical being. And they continued to look, in the richness of this last harvest, for the signs of yet another crop. Now they mourn a double loss: the loss of the human presence of this friend, and the loss of all that he might still have done.

But we must not see the matter in this light. Such feelings spring from the selfish anxiety that we would see our own life impoverished, deprived of this rare being, and our age deprived of the creative presence of one of its greatest artists.

Nevertheless, Paul Klee's own life, his development, his creative flowering and his end, obeyed laws deeper than our petty concerns.

There may well be artists who illustrate the triumph of the creative will over a disintegrating body. But not Klee. In Klee the creative spirit was too deeply rooted in his physical being for the two ever to have been in opposition. In him there was nothing pertaining to the spirit that had not sprung from the body. A glad acceptance of sensuousness in all its forms was the essence of his spiritual being. At no time did the will dominate this life devoted to natural growth.

But among the manifestations of the body is death, and before death, dying. I have spoken of Klee's last works. Painful though this may sound: they show no signs of any budding new spring. They are the finale of a life that knows its end has come. We must put it even more precisely, even more painfully, even more truthfully: they are variations on the theme of "Last Words." That is how intimately Klee's creative work remained linked to the laws of the body to the very last. His was a patient, accepting disposition; there was no place in it for the ambition to cheat death by a few days and a few more works. One whose clay has borne such rich fruit could confidently give his atoms back to the greater mother from whom he once received them on loan.

We are deeply convinced that some day the most soft whisper of the painter Paul Klee will prove to have been the most penetrating and the most humane voice in the art of our times. Now that Klee has completed the circuit of creature life upon this earth—a circuit that he taught us to perceive and love in such a multiplicity of forms—the true effectiveness of his work has just begun. It is work that adds up to an integral whole. The certainty of this, and of its future, is our consolation in this hour, when we must part with the man.

During his lifetime we who have been so immeasurably enriched by his art showed our gratitude for it in concern for him and his health. We give him our pledge that this gratitude will take the form of concern for his works.

Only after my mother's death in 1946 were my father's ashes buried in the Schosshalde Cemetery in Bern. His gravestone bears the rather well-known epigram from his diary:

IN THE HERE I AM UTTERLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE
FOR I DWELL JUST AS WELL WITH THE DEAD
AS WITH THE UNBORN
SOMEWHAT CLOSER TO CREATION THAN MOST
BUT FAR FROM CLOSE ENOUGH.

I should like to conclude these recollections of my father with something he said in Dessau:

Death is nothing bad; I long ago reconciled myself to it. How do we know what is more important, our present life or what comes after? I won't mind dying if I have done a few more good paintings.

PART TWO: *Themes in Klee's Creative Work*

13. Theater and Music

From his earliest youth Paul Klee was entranced by the theater. Perhaps what particularly struck him were the transformations, the changing appearances, the costumes and the sets. Certainly the theater was of the utmost importance to his work. However, Klee felt especially drawn toward opera. His preference for it may have been due to his pronounced musicality, to the many excellent performances under Mottl which he heard in Munich, or to opera's uniqueness as an art form. At any rate, Klee once remarked with a shrug about the performance of a play:

Ah yes, if only we had a score, as at the opera; but the way it is, we are at the mercy of the director's and the actor's arbitrariness.

He preferred reading plays to seeing them and often did so with great enthusiasm. Klee's diary has a number of entries about opera. First (No. 32):

At the age of ten I went to the opera for the first time. The opera was Trovatore, and I was struck by how much these people on the stage suffered, and by the fact that they were never at peace and seldom gay. But I rapidly adjusted to the style of pathos. I began to like Leonora's raving, and when she brought her wildly gesticulating hands to her mouth, I imagined she was desperately plucking at her teeth and even thought I saw something glittering as if teeth were being hurled away. In the Bible, after all, people rent their garments; why should not this lady be pulling her teeth out in despair?

In the fall of 1904, Klee wrote the following (No. 579):

In Bern I was particularly pained by a performance of the Flying Dutchman which I was attending as a music critic, so that I had to sit it out at least part way. The small orchestra had an unbearable sharpness; it sounded as though it were determined to shatter tin ears.

In June, 1905, Klee attended various opera performances in Paris. He jotted down impressions in his diary (No. 651):

A splendid performance of the Barber. For once an Almaviva sang like a fiddle. Rosina charming, not at all insipid; the verve of youth throughout. Grand vocal art. The orchestra not delicate enough. Massenet's Cherubin, finely wrought music,

but wrought. Louise—purest kind of hack work. Both performances at the Opéra Comique for the most part done in highly cultivated fashion, admirable as ensemble work rather than for the soloists. Armide, which we heard twice, was a great event. First of all, that man Gluck! Then the way it was done; you felt that every part functioned of its own accord. A feeling for style without any note of fumbling experimentation. No idiosyncrasies of conductor. The achievement general. Fine ballets. Wonderful orchestra.

In March, 1906, Klee wrote in his diary (No. 758):

Verdi's Otello performed in Bern. Love purified of jealousy by death—how beautifully the music expresses that at the end. I found the performance impressive because I did not yet know the work. The coloratura singer W. made a guest appearance as Rosina in the Barber. I did not like her as a performer; she somehow emanates inferiority.

In April, 1907, he wrote in his diary (No. 788):

Mottl's partiality for comic opera is very gratifying. We heard Donizetti's L'Elisir d'Amore. Geiss was full of life, though not really ardent—rather dry and comic. That was something new. Then I was supposed to see Shakespeare again. Richard III played by Lützenkirchen. Well, it was not too awful. The real star of the evening was a simple woman in the gallery. She hated Richard so, "There he is again, the scoundrel!" she hissed when Mathieu stepped onstage. It was incredibly funny.

Klee was interested in all opera: Wagner, Verdi, Offenbach, Debussy, Weill, Beethoven, Weber, Lortzing, Musorgski, Smetana and so on. However, he regarded Mozart as the greatest master of opera. As far as he was concerned, every one of Mozart's operatic works were equally great. Frequently, Klee would not be content with a single performance. If he thought it good, he went to hear it repeatedly. At home he studied the piano arrangement in order to know the opera thoroughly. He would become really angry when a conductor omitted the second finale of *Don Giovanni* and concluded the opera in D minor! Klee took this barbarous abridgment almost as a personal affront. When he was a young man, listening in the gallery of the Munich National Theater, he noted with exacting care on the score of *Così fan Tutte* his impressions of a performance magnificently conducted by Felix Mottl.

In 1905, Paul Klee wrote in his diary (No. 640):

More and more parallels between music and graphic art are forcing themselves upon me. But these things defy analysis. Of course both arts are temporal; that much could easily be demonstrated.

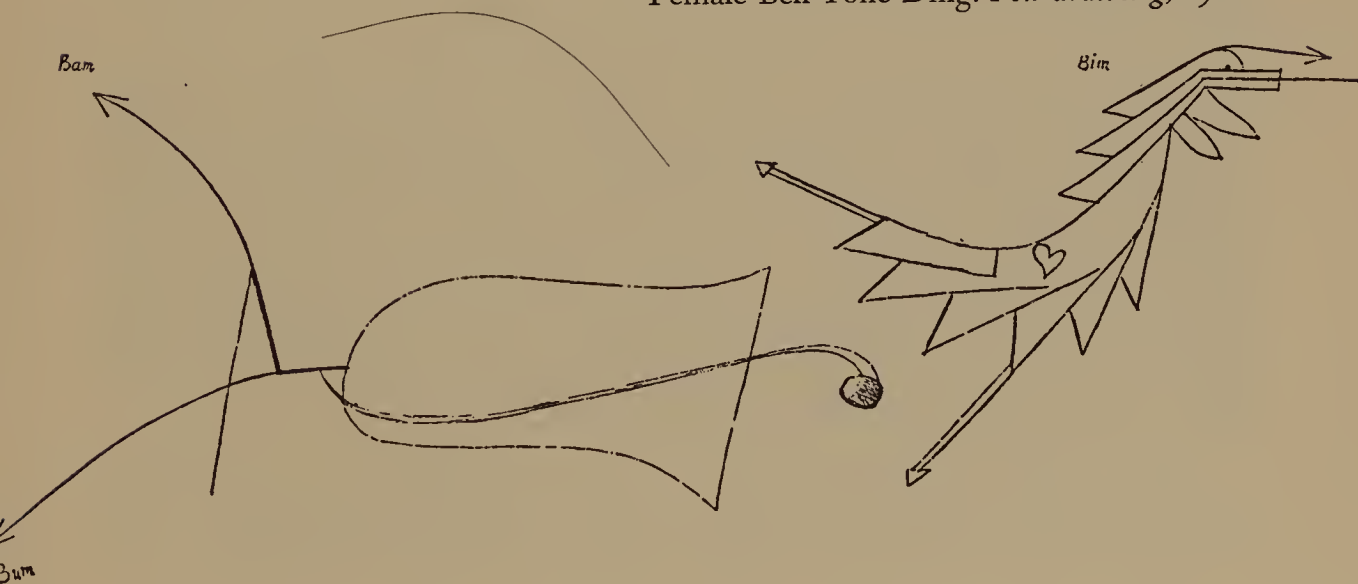
Music occupied a dominant place in Klee's work. For a long time he was in doubt as to whether he ought to be a musician or a painter. In 1889, he referred to this conflict in his diary (No. 67):

Music is like a bewitched sweetheart to me. Famous as a painter, writer or modern composer? Bad joke. As it is, I am without a profession and loaf.

Paul was seven when he received his first violin lessons. Family legend has it that the violin case was too heavy for him and his mother had to carry it to the lesson for her beloved son. Otto Jahn later became his teacher; he was not only a good pedagogue but also a close friend of Klee's. Writing in February, 1912, Klee speaks of his teacher's death as follows (No. 906):

I hear from Bern that good old Jahn, our dear musical mentor, has just died. There was a capable, serious and noble man. A great violin teacher. Not a word of exaggeration there. He taught beginners in such a way that a distant goal was implicit in it from the start. He himself was constantly struggling to make progress, and knew how to establish the right foundation for hard work, because as far as he was concerned hard work had to take precedence over talent.

Female Bell-Tone Ding. Pen drawing, 1922.



As an artist he was a shade too intellectual. In their efforts to relieve him of some of his burdens, and perhaps also to find a replacement for him, the authorities must have committed a number of crude errors recently. Several times he was so insulted that he was practically beside himself. But I imagine the errors were solely in matters of form. For the tragedy had always existed. Jahn lacked the virtuoso vein from the start, and that gave rise to problems which he could no longer cope with as he grew older. As a teacher, however, he stood at the very top. He had a stroke, was paralyzed, and within a few days he was gone.

This detailed obituary reveals something of the serious attitude Paul Klee took toward his music. Whether he was playing alone or with friends, he would suddenly be afire with an Italianate ardor and temperament. His eyes sparkled and he became completely absorbed in the music he was interpreting. Here is another quotation from his diary (No. 635):

In Beethoven, especially the late Beethoven, there are themes which do not pour out their interior meaning transitively, but shape themselves into a song complete within itself. In playing these passages one has to be very careful to see whether the psychic elements express concern for anyone else or exist for themselves alone. For my part I am gradually learning to feel the special attractiveness of the monologue quality. For in the final analysis one is alone in this earthly realm, even in love.

How greatly Klee was inspired by the genius of Mozart may be seen in the following extracts from his letters.

Klee wrote to his wife on November 16, 1932, as follows:

Yesterday we heard Mozart's Requiem. With feelings similar to those of hearing Furtwängler's Messiah, although the performance did not quite reach that peak of perfection. Stylistically, such interpretations are simply false. A wonderful quartet had been assembled. Peltenburg is a good alto; there were also Erb and Ernster, the latter improving greatly. The best of them all was Erb. The work is good even where Mozart's hand is missing (the Benedictus). But undoubtedly Mozart himself would have pushed it forward to some further development. The operas are ultimate, but they are after all not church works.

In Dessau, Klee missed playing chamber music, which had always been so much a part of his life. He therefore arranged to play with three string players of the

Friedrichtheater orchestra. He reported to Lily about one such evening in a letter of December 9, 1932:

The quartet session was particularly enjoyable this time. We played the Mozart D major with the inspired finale. Then a fugue of Master M. which I have heard orchestrated but which sounds far grander as chamber music and, nota bene, comes out far better in my strict tempo than when played flamboyantly. The introduction, too, is uncanny in its brilliance. Then, to refresh ourselves, we added Eine kleine Nachtmusik—a late work, incidentally. And after supper we took up Beethoven's E minor, op. 59, the most important in that series. The first and second movements, especially the second, were tough sledding, but it went smoothly, without nervousness. The allegretto with the thème russe took shape right away, and the finale went off so easily that we all felt pretty exhilarated. The new Second is a more spirited player than his predecessor.

And on February 1, 1933, Klee wrote to Lily about another musical evening:

Yesterday I had a go at chamber music. We played a small Mozart D minor with fugue, chiefly on account of the fugue. Otherwise it rates poorly beside its greater companion in D minor. Then we played No. 18 in D major. By that time it was half past eight and we ate the good things Leni had prepared for us. Afterward we smoked a bit, and then came the second part of our program. Beethoven F minor, the fiercely passionate transition to the late Beethoven. I wanted for once to play it with partners familiar with the form and skilled in ensemble work. The scherzo, which must be played with utmost splash, is marvelous. We finished with Haydn's "Fifths" Quartet, a major work, and that not only went off best of all, but was really good. I played myself into such a perfect state of relaxation that I was able to perform all kinds of violinistic acrobatics, without the slightest inhibition. That on the one hand. And then on the other hand there is the consideration that Haydn goes easier in ensemble work. There may be quite a few trouble spots left after practicing the parts, but these clear up right away in the ensemble. With Mozart it's just the reverse; the part is easier to play than the whole. With Beethoven, both are hard. My partners are now playing with unflagging zeal and very good technique, but without really penetrating the spirit. That is what comes of this era of ours, which I suppose will soon run its course. Will I ever get to play with partners who are exactly like myself? It would take all the money of a Croesus.

Klee commented on Beethoven's symphonies in a letter of September 8, 1930:

The first symphony concert offered Beethoven's Sixth and Seventh. The Sixth performed without the quality of landscape painting, but otherwise perfect in regard to form. The rustic scherzo followed by the thunderstorm was done most effectively; they handled it with that wit and cleverness that our age has brought to a high point.

The Seventh was on the whole more effective and expressive; I've heard only the marchlike allegretto movement done more effectively—by Bruno Walter. The conductor stood there without a score and showed off his most virtuoso side. Unfortunately he advanced quite far in the direction of unnaturalness, although he bathes all his egoistic ventures in the spotlight of so-called essentiality. No doubt about it, there is one element of downright mannerism we can do without. That is playing with extreme dynamics, without starting from the base of a medium or normal loudness and basing the exceptional pp's and ff's on it. German hysteria over contrasts seems to be getting out of hand.

Klee would also report on operas and operettas he had attended. Thus on December 16, 1931, he wrote to Lily from Düsseldorf:

I went to the Kleine Haus to hear Périclès again. The music is so refreshing and so interesting that one can hear it even more often. The performance is still brilliant, though the spirit at the première was a few notches above it. The conductor and the female lead are splendid—the latter is the first talent I've encountered since Priska Aich who doesn't belong among the stars and yet is one. I was struck by Offenbach's German characteristics. In this operetta you feel his origins even more than in Tales of Hoffman. His genius emerges more and more. He could have followed the pattern of the other great composers of modern opera, but he veered off into ambiguities—and in so doing created work that will be long-lasting.

Klee's opinion of Johann Strauss was somewhat lower. On October 3, 1929, he wrote to Lily from Dessau:

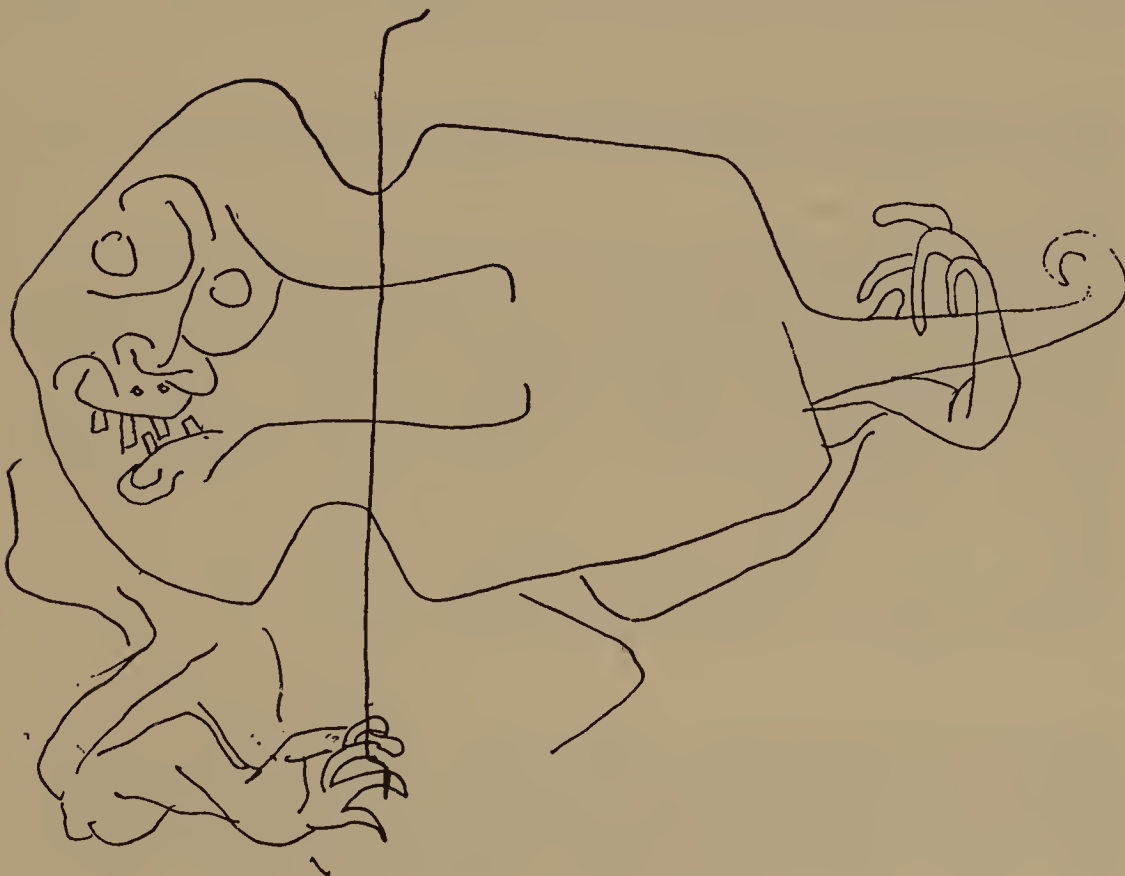
*But Strauss cannot fill an evening—not with concert music. Part of the time he yodels away, the rest he is the daintiest pastry-shop imaginable—and neither the one nor the other means anything to me. But the pit absolutely ate up the whole thing, and their sweet-and-sour vapors rose up to the stalls. The northern plucked owl reaped success as usual.**

* Strauss means "ostrich" in German. (Translators' note.)

Concerning a performance at the Bern Stadtheater, Klee wrote to Lily on December 21, 1934:

I went to the opera three times, first to Festspiel der Venus by Schoeck, then to the Les Pêcheurs de Perles and yesterday to Tchaikovsky's The Golden Shoes. In all three cases I enjoyed the musical side of the performances more than the dramatic. Yet it is somewhat unfair merely to listen, as if at a concert, while the stage lies open before you and the performers are going to such lengths to entertain. If I do happen to look, it is apt to be at the unfortunate moment when someone is going through some artificial, fancy bit of stage business, instead of just standing still in a neutral way. And then when something important comes up that ought to be acted out, I think to myself: it's going to be some more embarrassed wriggling again. None of it convinces me and so I don't get the most out of it. The Tchaikovsky opera

Old Fiddler. Pencil drawing, 1939.



would otherwise be all right, pretty stuff based on Gogol's *The Night Before Christmas*, and music which leans heavily on Russian national elements but is not pure nationalism, like Musorgski. That is, at least hybrid.

Klee commented critically on two modern composers in a letter to Lily of April 30, 1930, from Dessau:

There is little to say about the concert. It was a program of modern music plus, as a sop to the shopkeepers in the audience, Tchaikovsky's Symphony Number 5 in E minor. The first offering was a first performance: Sinfonietta, by Heinz Schubert. Quite a display of talent by a fair-haired young man. Begins very harshly and cacophonically, but takes on a definite quality right away: rather chorale-like. Then come some grimly humorous sections, a very unusual adagietto, and so on. We next had a symphonic piece with cello solo by Bloch. Tortured and bombastic. A few choice passages of subtle beauty, but the movement of the whole so paralyzingly inhibited. Rother brought out the E minor symphony with special brilliance, so that it sounded tremendous. The shopkeepers even applauded between the movements, and at the end they roared themselves hoarse as though they were at a soccer game.

Klee discussed Paul Hindemith's opera, *Neues vom Tage*, a good deal more seriously. He attended its dress rehearsal and wrote the following report to Lily on May 24, 1930:

When I reached Dessau I found an invitation to the dress rehearsal of Neues vom Tage to start at eleven o'clock. I just made the theater in time—the lights had already gone out. I groped my way forward blindly and stumbled over a cord. The music is absolutely first rate, highly intelligent and vigorous. A great deal of wit and parody. The libretto is fantastic, not nearly as good as the music. The performance is tomorrow; I don't know whether or not Hindemith himself will be there. It would be nice. The music did me good; I felt wonderfully elated afterward.

On May 27, 1930, he had this to say about the performance:

On Saturday evening I went to the première of Hindemith's new opera. The plot of the opera, that is, the libretto, is wretched, and not even the spectacularly good music can bring it to life. And yet the music grows directly out of the theme, so that a unity could have been achieved if the levels were not so uneven, with

the music having to stoop to reach the libretto. The performance was very lively, far more spirited than the dress rehearsal. My impression was greatly intensified at the second hearing, so that I want to go still a third time. That is quite something, since I've almost stopped going to the theater. Let's put it this way: it's as though Johann Sebastian Bach went to a revue. Hindemith managed to make the tension between the two extremes very lively. Moreover he kept the musical effectiveness mounting steadily for two solid hours. For piquant intermezzi he did little parodies on the whole of musical history between Bach and "today." At one point there is an arranged tête-à-tête to provide grounds for a divorce, and the music he uses is a brilliant take-off on the pathos of Siegfried and Brünnhilde. In another passage the managers charge down upon the hero in order to offer him contracts. The accompanying music is a grand opera march, in the style of Gounod's Faust, or as the last word in that kind of thing, the victory march from Aïda, with tubas. The managers go around on the stage tooting into a speaking tube.

Klee was not particularly receptive to the cinema. He was, however, very fond of the comedians of the silent films: Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, and above all Chaplin. In May, 1930, an abstract film was given at the Dessau Bauhaus. Klee wrote to Lily about it:

Richter gave a lecture at the Bauhaus on the art of the film, and showed some examples. So at last I had a chance to see the film by Eggeling which I saw being made in Zurich when Zurich was still a center of movie-making. Eggeling unfortunately died prematurely. Otherwise we would have had an artistic film. The other examples were fairly instructive, and I was able to learn something about the medium—which really goes against the grain for me—in fact I sacrificed two evenings to it. The movies could be art, but then nobody would pay any attention to them, just as nobody pays attention to the other arts which already exist in the full flower of development.

There are over five hundred titles in the catalogue of Klee's works which refer to the theater, masks and music. That is some sign of how intensively concerned he was with the phantom world of sound and sight. Here are some examples of these poetical and philosophical titles:

The Pianist in Distress, Comic Magazine Caricature of Modern Music; The Literary Piano; Two Acrobats on the Heart's Scale; The Bavarian Don Giovanni; The Order of High C; Lohengrin in the Cinema; You Monster, Dance to My

Gentle Song; Excerpt from a Ballet for Aeolian Harp; Principal Scene of the Ballet "The False Oath"; The Heroic Tenor as Concert Singer; Circus Grotesque with Falling Equestrian; A Master Must Pass through a Bad Orchestra; Don Juan's 461st Adventure; Scene from the Ballet of the Dwarfs; Trio with Don Giovannino.



The Peasant of the Punch-and-Judy Theater. *Pencil drawing, 1939.*

14. Animals

Paul Klee's ties with nature, the countryside, plants and animals were many-leveled; I could scarcely attempt to give any comprehensive account of them in this limited space. Ever since he was a boy Klee had been interested in botany. There was scarcely a plant which he could not identify, and by the Latin name as well. He owned a plant press of which he took the utmost care, and he would preserve plants of rare or peculiar form in various glass containers. He also had a deep attachment to animals—especially to cats. Even while still a student, he wanted a pet cat, as is evident from this diary entry of December 2, 1901 (No. 311) during his first stay in Rome:

Today they took my cat away, and I had to look on as they popped her into a sack. I at last understood what they had been trying to explain to me: that the cat was only on loan to them for a session of mouse catching. And I had already given my heart away. Now I am getting a civetta; I saw some in a shop sitting on bastone. They are hunting aids per la caccia. The padrona advised me against guinea pigs, sporchi, sempre urinare. I must have something living, and the turtle doesn't count: dorme sei mesi. Once the cat had a mezzo pollo rubato. What excitement: Ah, e un gran signore! niente patate, ma un mezzo pollo, ah!

Whenever conversation turned to dogs, my father would always say: "I don't want a dog; if you have one, you're only the dog's dog."

The cat's independence, its capriciousness, the beauty of all its movements, its cleanliness and attachment to the house and the people of the house, appealed to Klee. There are countless family anecdotes about this succession of beloved pets. When Father was quite young he adored the family cats Miez and Nuggo, and was always taking photos of them and painting their pictures. In 1916, we acquired our silver-gray tiger cat Fripouille—his name was later germanized to Fritzi. He had some wildcat blood in him and for that reason could never be completely tamed. We had him till Easter, 1924, when he was "laid to rest" in the garden of our Weimar apartment. Then, in 1930, the white Persian Bimbo was given to my parents by Karla Grosch. He had a fine, somewhat spoiled nature and was extremely fond of Father. By preference he would sit on fresh pastels and there do his "Left, shoulder arms!" as my father called it. Klee unfailingly let him do as he pleased. Bimbo could also talk in cat language, though his four big teeth interfered with his articulation. He had a little speech which Father used to translate from the cattish in the following fashion:

*the 'mastr knows wha he wans he can.
But 'has one vice. Nod smok̄ing
but sgratches wid a hairwhip on the fidle
that hurt Bimbo ear so bad.*

After the deaths of both my parents, Bimbo went to strangers and lived to an advanced age—seventeen.

The creatures that were most meaningful to Klee, aside from cats, were fish. Earlier in his life Father had been a passionate fisherman, but because of his growing love for animals he gave up fishing and hunting entirely. What a road can be traced from the early pictures of fish to the works of his middle and late periods! Horses, monkeys, camels, donkeys, snakes, bulls, birds and many fantastic animals peopled his imaginative life to the end. On February 12, 1902, he wrote in his diary (No. 375):

The apes in the park of the Villa Borghese! I see what is meant by sacred apes. I except only one, a baboon who stands too far below zero on the scale of morality. The gloomiest existence I ever saw. At the same time terribly human. Uglier than the devil, otherwise a close kin to him, begotten by the devil on a shriveled old witch. O primeval forest of the North! O Block̄sberg! He does not fit in Rome.

Karl Wolfskehl, a friend of all the artists in Munich, collected elephants on a grand scale. Once he visited Klee's apartment and discovered the small sculpture, *Old Blue Elephant*, at which he was beside himself with excitement. Touched by this passion, Klee gave it to him.

Stationed as he was at various aerodromes during the war, Klee was stimulated to do a great many pictures of birds. For the rest of his life, he loved to observe them. Thus, writing on October 3, 1930, from Dessau, Klee recounts the following incident:

The titmice are very busy in the bedroom—I am feeding them in there, for the fun of it. When the nuthatch comes, all the others take fright; they fly up and perch on the rubber plant, the bedposts, in the bathroom or somewhere else, until he darts away again—with six grains in his beak. The greenfinches have left, but on the other hand some saucy tufted titmice are around.

In 1928, Klee set down a number of charming "animal epigrams" in his calendar. A good many of these deal with cats, as for example:

There are cats who look like flowers bearing arms,

Note on a sound produced by a cat: Grrmyocmomow!

At times in his letters to Mother, Klee would write exclusively about his beloved Bimbo—sometimes called Hinde. There are ten letters of this sort. On July 16, 1931:

I begin, and immediately Bimbo is standing on the paper; ever since coming here he has been bossing the household. All other interests are supposed to be dropped, and though I try to get something done behind his back, it's not easy to trick him. He realizes in time that something is up, leaps to my shoulder and in this way travels around with me everywhere. He's perched on my shoulder right now, but in this case it has to be interpreted differently: as a sort of compromise with me. Actually he would prefer to sit on the paper still damp from the ink. Since there is no one but me around, he is even more dependent on me than usual. I find I can use his well-known rest periods around noon and at night from eleven o'clock till dawn, the first for working and the latter for sleeping. If I were inclined to be angry with him—and he certainly gives me plenty of reason to be—a glance at that angelic face is enough to make me give in. I have only insisted once—in Bimbo's own interest. It was late at night and he'd been given permission to take one more turn in the woods. He was in such high spirits that he raced way off into the bushes and would not come back. I—no longer as young as he—raced after him, finally caught up with him and carried him straight back into the house. He is looking very good, is growing fatter, and his coat is beautiful.

On January 30, 1933:

This evening it is three degrees above freezing, and it is raining. Bimbo has taken notice and made a tour of the roof involving a good many loops. Now his patty-paws are leaving little pretty prints all over, making a drawing which might be scored "Roof andantino."

On February 5, 1933:

Our Bimbo is much annoyed because Tintebolz keeps prowling around the house and his penetrating smell comes seeping in through the cracks, so you can never get rid of him completely, even after he's gone. The devil's grandmother is harmless compared to Tintebolz. Anyhow, what can a fellow do about woofs? They're handsome, aren't they, big and strong and jumpy. Tintebolz is also very mean, he bitted Frau Feininger and sgratched Leni's arm! But the massa is good, he chases even Tintebolz away. Thus speaks Bimbobeli, and he's right, as always.

On January 27, 1935:

Man-child and cat-child are well. The latter is obsessed by an enormous status drive these days, pokes his nose in any place that it's hard to get to. Lies in a cardboard box much too small for him, slides down the sloping drawing board, does acrobatics on radiators and book shelves, and is so charming while he goes about it that in the end I permit everything. Now and then we ask to go out for a while, and then the opportunity to play quartets is seized. Sometimes even at our house—recently we had a quartet with two cellos. That was too much for Bimbo. Such guests are not his cup of tea. Even Grandpa and Aunt Mathilde would be preferable.

On June 9, 1936:

I miss Bimbo; there are two pretty woofs in the sanatorium, listn nice to consurt and don' bark. Bud no kits. Tell Bimbs to be good. Hobe he's all right, poor boyke. Where's he sleebing?

On June 13, 1936:

Don' ferget to tell Bimbs that a little ole gray woof is here who always gives me a quick greeting in passing.

On June 17, 1936:

You muss dell Bimbo the story 'bout the otter. Many go by the sbot bud nobody's met it. A woof wanted to drink in the overflow basin of the fountain and plopped in, liddle fellow, had to swim but couldn't get over the rim, too round and smooth. Frau R.—Veera—sawed it from her window and rooshed to help and pulled the leetle woof oud. Dumb beople laughed. Dell Bimbo all 'bout it plainly.

On August 20, 1936:

A dancer cat has been giving performances now and then, probably from May, 1936, on. Cat is no longer an exotic concept in this region. Please give respects to Herr von Bimbo from his master.

On April 25, 1939:

Herr Bimbo had figured on being alone with me and was very jealous. When Fritz stroked him and handled him a little too roughly, as though Bimbo were a

puppy, His Jealousy made a vigorous sortie at the hand, and a slash was the result. We were amazed at this behavior. But Uncle Fritz didn't take offense; we treated the dueling scar with "Magic Salve."

On June 16, 1936, Klee wrote to Lily about a walking trip through the Swiss National Park in Graubünden:

Yesterday we were at the Ofen Pass, and enjoyed the view down into the Münster valley. Spring is just arriving up there; the flowers were simply wonderful. Nature is left untouched; they do not even pick up fallen branches. The animals are left to themselves. Only not many of the latter showed themselves, whereas outside the nature preserve, on the way back, we met two foxes. The first was very handsome, indignant at the disturbance; he was walking three or four yards below and off to one side of us and waited there until we—having stopped—had had our fill of looking at him. A crow was there too. Today I came upon a full-grown adder, pale coppery in color. It was sunning itself on the edge of the road and hoped I would pass by. But I made a few respectful sounds, whereupon slowly and without hissing it retreated to a fir tree towering up from the slope below. The whole thing made a fine show.

Over seven hundred titles in Klee's catalogue of works refer to animals. Klee's imagination went unexpected ways. What tragic and sympathetic understanding of nature is expressed in a single picture, *She Roars, We Play*, for example. The mother cries, perhaps from fear, perhaps from desire, or to protect the young from attack. Beside her the cubs play, quite unconcerned.

The following titles of pictures seem to me particularly interesting:

A Dog Berates Poor People; The Fish Rebel Against the Fisherman; Birds Make Sexological Experiments; Houses Drawn by Oxen, Oxen Spitted on Lampposts, Overpass; Landscape with Rain-Swans; The Egg-Tomcat; Gallus Militarius (Chanticleer and Grenadier); The Shameless Animal; Small Experimental Machine Meow Chirp; Columbarium of the Oxfrog Family; A Young Fox Wishes to Fly; Tomcat at the Beginning of Adventurous Journeys; The Prickly Snake with the Mice; Dummox Bitten by a Snake; Six-legged Canine Devil; Out of My Eyes, Snail!; Man and Animal Ending Together; Help! Snake Is Here! Cannot!; Now You'll Get It, Dog; The Eagle Has Him; Not Even a Swan!; That's How I'd Ride, That's How!; A Tomcat as Bull; The Biblical Snake Shortly After the Curse.

15. Humor and Philosophy

Humor played a most important part in the personality and the work of Paul Klee. I could tell a great many anecdotes about this from my own recollections; but since I have tried to let my father speak mostly for himself in this book, I shall describe only one brief episode. In 1923, a meeting of the faculty and students took place in the modeling room of the Weimar Bauhaus. The purpose of the meeting was to do something about a number of handicraft masters who did not fit in with the rest of the school. The director, Walter Gropius, delivered an impassioned speech about justice and injustice. Master Johannes Itten discoursed on an Indian legend concerning a man who was bitten by a poisonous snake and to save himself had to run round and round in circles, sweating out the poison. When, after several speeches by masters and pupils tension had reached a climax, Paul Klee suddenly rose and asked for the floor. Everyone fell silent. Then, with utmost calm, speaking in his Swiss-tinged High German, my father read the text on his package of pipe tobacco: Brinkmann Fine Cut. One Hundred Grams. Dutch Mixture. Price, sixty pfennig. . . . There was frenzied applause; ruffled tempers were soothed. It was a good example of Klee's invariably subtle and carefully timed humor. Within the family Klee would often tell stories about his boyhood pranks in Bern: how the pupils of the Gymnasium carried their teacher's winter supply of stovewood away from his house, and piled it up again on the opposite sidewalk; or how they hung a barn lantern on the outstretched hand of the Bubenberg Monument. One particularly raw story of this sort is recorded in his diary (No. 759):

Everyone still remembers a pretty anecdote of Haller's days at the Gymnasium. We were going to punish a teacher by shitting on his door latch. Two strong seniors lifted Mimu (Haller) to the proper height. Thiesing suggested that it would be easier to produce the stuff in a more comfortable position and afterward to transfer it somehow to the latch. But Haller rejected this method as too ordinary. He had no pity on the seniors; the sacredness of the action ought to give them strength, he said. To put all the emphasis on the aesthetic aspect alone seems to me like a type of mathematics that deals only with positive numbers.

In Klee's works thoughts on growth and decay, human aspirations and human frailty, recur constantly. Any list of his pictures abounds in distinctively philosophical titles. These titles also reveal his deep sense of language and form. Paul Klee has this to say about his literary bent (Diary No. 172):

I should have written many poems in order to give form to my new creative energy. Of course, though, this did not happen. For to be a poet and to write poetry are two different things. Nevertheless that strength and tranquillity has remained dear to me for my later life as well, and I prefer not to sneer at it.

Klee did write poems, in a style all his own. They are to be found in his diaries. Here is one written in 1916:

*Captive in a room.
Great danger.
No exit.
There's an open window,
up,
push off:
I fly free,
but it rains thinly.
It rains thinly,
It rains,
rains,
rains . . .
rains . . .*

The following comes from his diary (No. 167):

*Go hence, you grand desires.
Farewell, immortality.
Fall, you mountains of the mind,
When the peak is loneliness.*

Epigrams (No. 306):

*In God's stead
red
Beauty's own
tone.*

*Palette knife
saves my life
never again
verse of old men*



Critic. Pen drawing, 1914.

parting
smarting
sheen
green

Deprived
arrived
paid
paint thinly laid

Flower
power
controls
souls
modest and small
is all.
Trace
nature's face.

The lines of which these rhymes were terminations were too thought-out, too little dreamed and too intent on their rhymed endings, and yet they came to me in an insightful hour of the night. It rains, if it doesn't exactly pour.

No. 863:

*Open, portal to the depths,
chamber at the bottom, release me
to the centers of illumination.
And bright hands come that grasp me,
and friends' voices say gladly:
Come here, you images of beautiful wild animals,
rise out of your cages.
Let fingers glide lovingly
Through flaming pelts.
And we are one as once we were in God's garden:
day and night
and sun and splendor of the stars.
In the paradise of those
Who quiver with poesy.*

The last of this group is No. 948:

*A kind of stillness glows down to the bottom.
From somewhere
there shines a something,
not of here,
not of me,
but God's.
God's! If only an echo,
only God's reflection,
still something of God's presence.
Drops from deep,
light in itself.
Whosoever slept and himself breathless found:
He . . .
At end came home to his beginning's ground.*

Dr. Carola Giedion has made a collection of Paul Klee's poems in her book *Anthologie der Abseitigen*, published by Benteli Verlag in 1946. Here are two characteristic examples from this edition:

Ultimates

*In the heart's core
alone implore
fading footsteps by the score
of the cat's walk:
her ear spoons sound,
her foot covers ground
her looks burn
fore and stern
from her face no turn-
ing back
beauteous as the flower
But armed with weapons plus
and doesn't really have anything to do with us.*

1926

*The wolf, chewing on the man, and
with an eye to the dogs, speaks:
Tell me, then, where is
tell me where
then is your god?
where is your god? after . . .
you see him here
right by you
the god of dogs.*

*To see is to know
that anyone torn to pieces by me
is not a god.
Then where is your god?
—help build—
bird that sings
doe that springs*

*flower on rock
fish in loch
worm in ground
help build
the tower to God.
Echo: "to God."*

Klee's verbal inspirations were highly interesting. The following fantastic bits are to be found jotted down in a pocket calendar of 1928, preserved by chance.

Herr Potsblitz and Herr Goddam came together in Potsdam; such was the founding of that city.

Ghostly bidet gallops through the city with its rider.

A drunkard was a dear kind man and had no enemy except his bottle, and that he loved with a Christian tenderness.

In gentle reminiscence of Mozart's letters to his cousin, Klee wrote to Lily on May 2, 1930:

Now I have nothing more to say; at this point Mozart would add a few slightly indecent remarks and sign himself Hanswurst.

On the night of June 30, 1925 I dreamed with remarkable distinctness.

In the corner formed by two walls of the house, beneath the overhang of the roof, I saw a large bird's nest. It was occupied, however, by a cat family. The kittens were already well grown, about four weeks old, and one of them in particular, a dark tiger kitten, had scrambled up boldly and his hindquarters hung far out over the edge of the nest.

Below the nest ran a very narrow ledge, and this was the route by which the mother cat used to spring from the nest into an open window. The idea that the kittens' first exploration would take place along so dangerous a path worried me, and I tried to think of some way to meet the danger.

Then I saw myself digging in a garden. I was laboring very hard to do something that would yield pleasant results.

Suddenly a dog came running up to this spot and rolled around on it, destroying what I had done, and digging with his snout to add to the destruction.

People were surprised that I did not interfere with him. But I made an excuse for myself by calling him "an expert."

My Uncle When He Was Enchanted. *Pencil drawing, 1932.*



In 1930, Klee returned to Dessau after a stay in Italy. The northern climate was always hard on him and he would often make sarcastic references to it in his letters. Thus, to Lily on October 1, 1930:

Fear of bad weather for travel is no protection from the devil incarnate where one is, I might say. But in spite of everything we want to go on being cheerful, eat well—though not heavily—and drink, and I want to paint pictures that will survive us. The days are often so dreary that I can make the pale reflections of Viareggio blaze like fireworks in my mind. So poets and thinkers are supposed to flourish in such a climate! A fine how-do-you-do! But one must stick it out, it seems.

In the depression year of 1931, Klee applied his experience with his own artistic

ups and downs to the economic crisis. On July 12, he wrote to Lily:

Flechtheim was in the best of spirits, refuses to be alarmed and is forging new plans. I am really just the same, ready at any time to start from the beginning again. I'm used to that from my painting.

As I have already mentioned, Klee was interested in everything—including house-keeping. But his interest had its limits, as is evidenced by this letter of February 15, 1932:

Today we had meat broth, boiled beef and green beans. In the evening the same cold, with bean salad. It was a meal for a washday, and yet I'm not doing any laundry. That is the only household task I haven't tried yet. If I could take it on, I'd be more universal than Goethe.

A similar humorous vein cropped up in many other letters. In a letter of December 22, 1932, he wound some serious remarks around an old joke:

I've never yet run into a Don Quixote in large type. I think such a book would have to be on wheels, it would be that heavy. It's simpler, I suppose, to consume an ordinary edition with a reading glass. Like the old fuddy-duddy who, when his grandson insisted on having a snake right away, said: "Here, take the magnifying glass and find yourself an earthworm." Whereupon, with this somewhat hoary joke, silence ensues, so that the angels can intone undisturbed.

Polished though his correspondence sounds, he was often disinclined to write letters. A note of June 22, 1936, suggests something of this feeling:

I was very surprised and just as touched as you-all that two handsome, well-grown letters arrived in response to my modest greeting. Seems as though the thrifty receive a generous harvest. I'm now in the third week here. I can at least say I'm fine and well taken care of, really as if I were in a higher sphere.

My father wrote me the following letter for my thirtieth birthday. The date is November 27, 1937:

This time the impending day has, if possible, an even greater significance because there's a zero attached to the end of it. When you first saw the light of this world you brought with you just such a zero, but with nothing in front of it. That was

the birthday, granted; but nobody is of a mind to start counting then; people wait a year before they dare to say one. The other zeros had the support of numbers in front of them, and this time we've reached three. I warmly wish you for this and every other birthday progress and good fortune in keeping and increasing.

A letter of December 29, 1937, is a good instance of Klee's judicious formal style:

As far as his situation is concerned, let us not jump to conclusions, but rather check once more to see whether our apprehensions are justified. For we must await this outcome before beginning, with cool heads and without any trace of agitation, to build anew. May the new year free us of uncertainty, so that we can apply our forces rationally and fruitfully.

A birthday letter from Klee to his sister Mathilde, dated January 27, 1938:

I heartily wish you all good things for your birthday; may the next year of your life take the form you would most like. Of course there are bound to be some indigestible morsels in what comes our way, but we can hope that our strength remains equal to the harder things. Life is certainly more fascinating that way than it would be purely à la Biedermeier. Let everyone take what suits his taste from the two bowls of sweet and salt. The choice should be open to every one at least once a year—to be allowed to wish for what was missing from preceding years. With foresight and prudence one will experience no rude disappointments!

As artist and man, Klee was much taken up with thoughts on life and death. Perhaps the deepest expression of his feelings on the matter may be found in the following lines written two years before his death, on August 17, 1938:

To feel something reconciling about this solution. If only the riddle of death were not so ambiguous! No less so is the riddle of life, when one asks oneself what beauty and splendor can be found in the horrors of recent times.

In the catalogue of Klee's works I have found some 750 titles that might fall under the classification of humor and philosophy of life. Here is a small sample:

Two Men Meet, Each Assuming the Other to Hold a Higher Position; Joseph's Chastity Rouses the Vexation of the Dark Regions; A Spirit-Mother Anxiously

Watches a Spirit-Child's First Departure; The Unborn Is Fitted into His Future; This World and That United; One Eye That Sees, the Other That Feels; Mass Killing Doesn't Matter; A Negro Child Does Not Understand the Snow; A Padlock Goes for a Walk at Night; She Was Genuinely Kind to a Robber; The Fable of the Fleeing Know-it-all; Envious Thoughts on "Irrevocable"; Head Listening to the Propaganda Voice from the Ether: "And You Will Eat Your Fill"; Simplex Visits Complex.

To conclude this chapter, I would like to quote Paul Klee's best-known statement, from his diary:

In the here I am utterly incomprehensible. For I dwell just as well with the dead as with the unborn. Somewhat closer to Creation than most, but far from close enough.

Does warmth emanate from me? Coolness? From a realm beyond all fire that question cannot be clarified. When I am most remote I am most devout. In the here I am often somewhat malicious. Those are nuances, though they all spring from one cause. Only the parsons are not religious enough to see it. And they are just a bit annoyed, those Scribes and Pharisees.

16. Landscape

For many years Klee had ambivalent feelings about the whole question of landscapes. But since he really felt a close link to the countryside, he felt compelled to fight his way through to a grasp of color. I shall trace chronologically the various stations along his way, trying to show how landscape became more and more important in my father's artistic development over the years. Again and again, from his earliest youth to his last period of creative activity, Klee paid special attention to landscapes. He would frequently set down his impressions of travel in the form of sketches, which he intended to do more with in more settled circumstances.

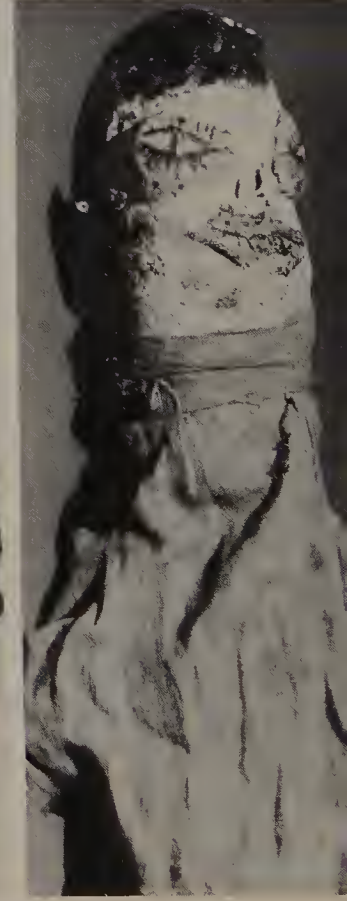
As early as his tenth year, that is, 1889, Klee felt the spell of the Alpine landscape. No doubt school art classes stimulated him to do the many drawings which have been preserved to this day. Klee did not, to be sure, include them in his catalogue of works; but at the time he made them he numbered them, for even as a child he had a strongly marked sense of order. In all these works which deviate from "usual" children's drawings, a glimmer of the "Klee manner" can be seen.

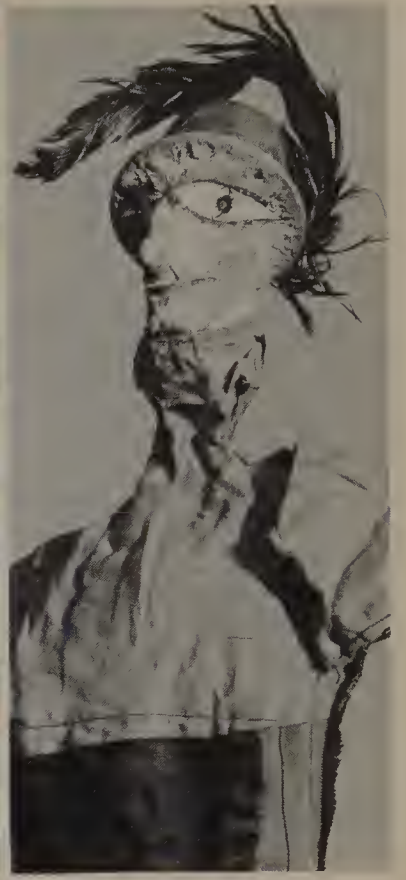
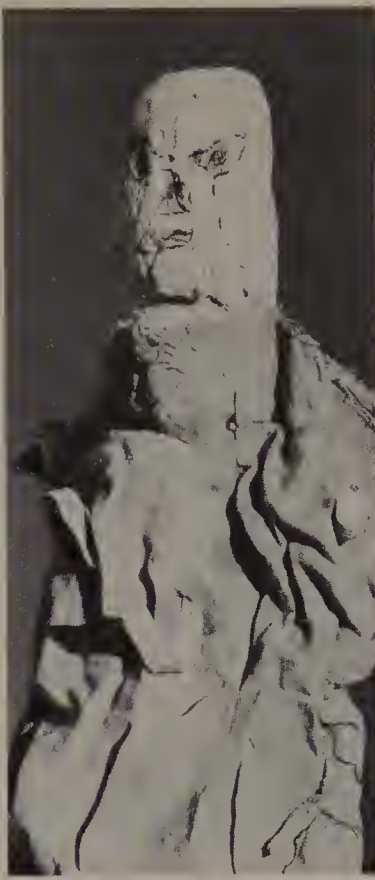
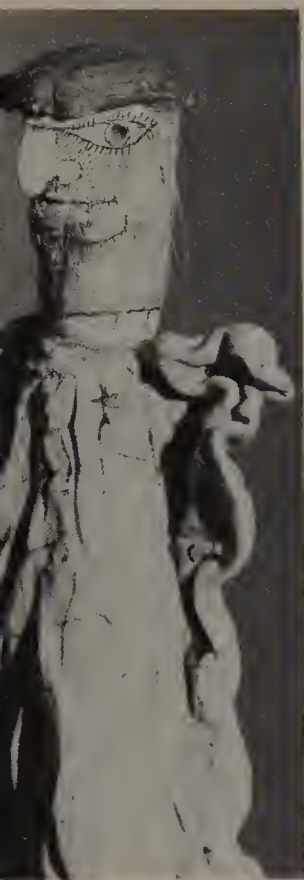
All the while that Klee attended the Gymnasium he continued his series of satirical portraits and drawings of animals. In addition, especially during the last three years (1896-98) he produced a number of landscapes. These were mostly pencil studies or wash drawings, made either in sketchbooks or as separate plates in the course of outings to Elfenau or St. Peter's Island, outings undertaken in the deliberate search for subjects. We also find a great many sketches of humorous incidents and landscapes in his schoolbooks and notebooks, for he evidently took refuge from the "boredom" of lessons in drawing. The landscapes done from nature might almost be called "academic"; they show a distinct fondness for fine detail. The imaginary landscapes in the schoolbooks, on the other hand, were obviously influenced by Jugendstil, which was very much the vogue in those days. Yet even in these we discover that independent structure which became characteristic of Klee's later creative work (from 1925 to 1934). Drawing prevails. Only slowly and cautiously did Klee introduce color into his work. In his first experiments we see very light, delicate and transparent hues, although occasionally he went in for extremely dark and heavy shadings which suggest a debt to Böcklin and Stuck. In later years the landscape motifs of his early youth often recurred, motifs drawn from the foothills of the Alps around Bern, from the quarry of Ostermundigen or Seeland, the region between the Lake of Neuchâtel and Solothurn.

After much discussion, young Paul's parents gave him permission to go to Munich in the fall of 1898, after he had completed his studies at the Gymnasium.



Paul Klee and friends playing a Schubert quintet at the Knirr school in Munich. From left to right: Siegrist (second violin), Fritz Stubenvoll (viola), Julius Labba (second cello), Franz Schmidt (first cello), Paul Klee (first violin). 1900.





Punch dolls made by Paul Klee for his son Felix during the 1920's. (Above) From left to right: Philistine, Step-grandmother, Black Ghost, German Nationalist, Old Man, Electric Spook, Buddhist Monk, Bandit. (Below) From left to right: Sultan, Pure Fool, Scarecrow Ghost, Russian Peasant, Beringed Devil, Mr. Death, The Barber of Bagdad.





(Above) From left to right: Young Peasant Woman, Electric Plug Ghost, Spinster, Peasant, Self-Portrait, Crowned Poet, Bearded Frenchman.

(Below) From left to right: Mr. Gander, Whitehaired Eskimo, Sly Peasant Woman, Mrs. Death, Matchbox Sprite, Monk, Clown Broadear, Portrait of Emmy Scheyer.





Sets for the Punch-and-Judy theater which Paul Klee made for his son Felix. Weimar, 1922.





(Above, left) Kandinski (left) and Klee playing "Goethe and Schiller" in Hendaye-Plage, August, 1929.

(Above, right) Kandinski and Klee (right) in Hendaye-Plage.

(Below) Paul Klee in the Emmental. Summer, 1939.





Photographs of Paul Klee at various stages of his life. (Above, left) Bern, 1900. (Above, right) Bern, 1911. (Below, left) Munich, 1908. (Below, right) Bern, 1902.

Remarks written by Paul Klee on the back of the last picture: "Unfortunately I am dissatisfied with this shot, too. The miserable frame in the background distracts from the line of the profile. When you receive the next picture, which is better, perhaps you'll be glad to send back the two preceding ones. The right eyebrow is invisible. It belongs to an object in the background."



The plateau countryside around Munich, contrasting so strongly with the Swiss landscape, had a rousing effect upon Klee. He also spent several weeks in Burg-hausen on the Salzach River, along with the other students of Knirr's school, and came back from this sketching trip with a number of remarkable landscape studies. He visited Italy from October, 1901, to May, 1902, along with his friend Hermann Haller. His diaries for that period are highly illuminating. On October 24, 1901, he wrote (No. 278):

Genoa. Arrival by night. The sea in moonlight. Wonderful air outside. Grave mood. Tired as a beast of burden from a thousand impressions. For the first time have seen the sea at night from a hill. . . .

On a voyage from Genoa to Leghorn he wrote in his diary (No. 282):

The voyage was an experience. The way huge nocturnal Genoa with its lights like broadcast stars gradually vanished, absorbed by the light of the full moon, the way one dream flows into another. . . . At about ten o'clock we sailed on the Gottardo; we remained on deck until midnight. . . .

Klee and Haller went on to Rome, to explore and study this wonderful city which has so much to give young artists. By and by they discovered the magnificent country around the city. Klee mentions this in his diary (No. 309):

November 22, 1901. Today was sunny. We tramped far out across the Aventinus and down to Porta San Paolo. Going back, we followed the course of the Tiber, against its current. Below the last bridge were anchored steamers and sailboats they had tugged upriver. Closeness of the sea.

And on April 10, 1902, Klee wrote of an outing to Tivoli (No. 397):

The waterfalls have been portrayed and described all too frequently. We spent the afternoon in the Villa d'Este and toward evening went to the Villa Hadriana, a thoroughly paradisiacal portion of this earth. In the evening there were coloristic moods of a subtlety and a solemnity hardly to be expected in Italy—we tend to think of Italy as loud, which is quite wrong. There is a moral force in such coloration. I see it just as precisely as others do; someday I shall be able to render it. When?

In June, 1902, Klee analyzed his attitude toward landscape (Diary No. 421). After the Italian journey he had returned to Bern. The following comments were provoked by an evening spent on the Bächimatt near Thun:

Earlier, even when I was a child, beautiful landscape was altogether unequivocal to me. A setting for moods of the soul. Now dangerous moments occur, in which Nature seeks to devour me. At such times I myself am no longer anything, but I have peace. That would be fine for old people, but as for me—I am in debt to my life, for I have given promises. To whom? To me, to her (I say that loudly and firmly); to friends (tacitly, but no less firmly). Alarmed, I jump up from the lake shore; the struggle begins again. Bitterness has come back. I am not Pan in the reeds; I am only human and I want to ascend a few steps, really ascend. I want to affect the world—but not as a collectivity, like bacteria, but as a single entity down here, with connections to what is up there. To be anchored in the cosmos, alien here, but strong—I suppose that is the goal. But how to do it? Grow, first of all simply grow. For practice: set up goals that most people have no notion of—a kind of playing études. Higher things then follow more smoothly, more easily. There is no peace; peaceableness has devoured itself.

In the following diary entry, December, 1903, we see Klee enlisting landscape impressions in the service of his abstract ideas (No. 539):

There are two mountains where all is bright and clear: the mountain of animals and the mountain of the gods. In between lies the misty vale of men. If a man chances to glance upward, he is gripped by an insatiable premonitory yearning—he who knows that he does not know yearns for those who do not know that they do not know, and for those who know that they know.

In June, 1904, Klee wrote in his diary (No. 564):

I badly needed to keep an extremely cool head, whereas a truly tropical intermezzo now descended from heaven. I tramped about in a fever of restlessness. Once I suddenly found myself by the shore of the Aare; I had walked there as if my brain were on fire, turned absolutely inward. What a sight suddenly appeared: this emerald-green water racing along and the shore golden in the sun! I felt as if I had awakened from a nightmare. For a long time I had ceased to have an eye for landscape. Now it lay before me in all its splendor—shattering! How I had renounced, had been forced to renounce because I wanted to renounce. To this day I have led a life of thought, austere and sans hot blood, and I shall have to go on leading it because I want to. O Sun, Thou, my Lord!

In June, 1905, Klee visited Paris for the first time, and was greatly stirred by the city. In April, 1906, he traveled to Berlin and Kassel, and in September of that

year he launched upon another kind of journey, becoming a "husband, for at the registry in Bern" he "passed through the portal of marriage," as he jokingly put it.

After Klee removed to Munich, the landscape that interested him most was the drab wasteland on the outskirts of the city: Schwabinger Landstrasse, Oberwiesenfeld with its drill ground, the Canal of Milbertshofen, and the wilder part of the Englischer Garten, Hirschau. Munich was expanding to the north; there were innumerable building sites and building lots. We do not ordinarily think of such terrain as real "landscape" yet Klee felt at it such. His drawings and etchings of the period insist on the poignance, the significance of every individual plant among the gray sea of houses of the metropolis.

During those years in Munich important exhibitions of French impressionists were to be seen—shows that shocked the philistines and roused the youth to excitement. Klee's affinity to graphic art brought him into close contact with such Swiss artists as Albert Welti, Ernst Kriedolf and Ernst Sonderegger. But his own concern with landscape increased as his intellectual ties with the by then well-known impressionists became stronger. Again and again he returned to the problem of rendering landscape. These were his thoughts on the matter in November, 1907 (Diary No. 842):

Naturalistic painting, which I turn to again and again for training and orientation, has the handicap of not being salable here. It does not lend itself to linear treatment, for lines as such do not really exist in it. Lines are generated only as borders between different spots of tonality or color. Every impression of nature can be set down in the simplest way with colored and tonal spots, freshly and directly.

In the summer of 1910, Klee described two outings in Seeland (the lake district around Bern) (No. 881):

I have twice spent a day in the Murten district. Each time I managed to do a couple of good pieces. The first time was lovely summer weather, and I crossed the big bog, leaving the highway between Kerzers and Müntschemier and heading for Sugiez. It wasn't such easy going, and I nimbly jumped a good many broad ditches full of water. At the widest of them I gave myself courage by throwing my painting kit across first, and then the owner had to follow—after a ten-yard running start! Such expeditions are lovely when you're alone and make all the decisions without having to consult anyone else. The summer has been sultry, and the weather has strongly affected the flora of the bogs. After two hours of strenuous tramping I made a halt and set up my headquarters under the Broye bridge at Sugiez. From there I strolled about here and there, lay in wait for the little steamer, let the

Neuchâtel motorists have a laugh at me. The main thing was that I did some shooting!

In April, 1912, Paul Klee paid his second visit to Paris. His diary contains a circumstantial account of the momentous sixteen days he spent there. So much had happened to the whole field of art between 1905 and 1912. Since the fall of 1911, Klee himself had been closely associated with the Munich group around the *Blue Rider*, and thus with Kandinski and Marc. But the real intellectual center of the modern movement was Paris. We can thus appreciate how important this trip was for Klee. His visits to Delaunay and Le Fauconnier, and to Kahnweiler's gallery, where he saw Picasso's first cubist works, decisively affected his own artistic development. If we study the works Klee produced between April, 1912, and April, 1914, we can observe the transition to abstraction actually taking place, and especially the churning up of color in landscapes.

In April, 1914, Paul Klee went to Tunis, along with his friends August Macke and Louis Moilliet. This now-famous journey wrought some remarkable transformations in Klee's creative work. He described the trip in his diary (No. 926) under the heading of "Journey to Tunis." Here are some extracts from his log:

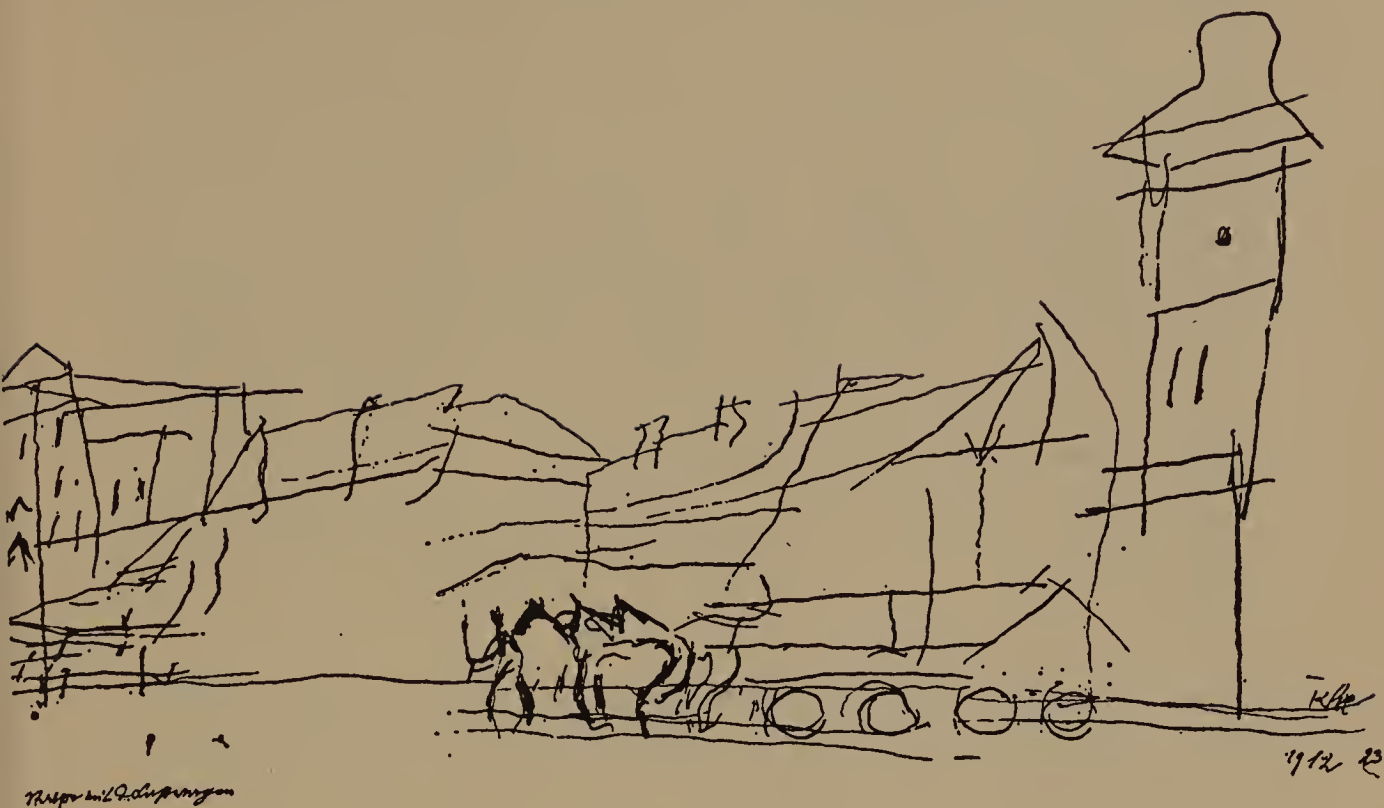
Sunday, April 5, 1914. At twelve-fifteen we went on from Lyons. The first section of countryside we passed through is, I think, called the Dauphiné, and then came Provence. A charming southern land. The Rhone country near Geneva had been extremely powerful, absolutely tops, in fact, where the train branches off across the Rhone bridge after Aix-les-Bains. Then the red-flowering little trees began, and the roofs orange-terracotta, enchanting, my very own true orange.

Monday, the morning of April 6, tramped around in Marseilles, and walked out far beyond the gates. I had the feeling that I could well stay here for a long, long time. The region is tremendous and coloristically new.

Tuesday, April 7. Woke up in sight of the coast of Sardinia. The colors of water and air are even more intense today than yesterday. The colors burn more powerfully and are rather darker. In the afternoon the African coast appeared. Later could clearly make out the first Arab city. Sidibou-Said, a mountain ridge out of which white houses grow in severely rhythmical forms. The very embodiment of fairy tales, only not quite tangible yet, rather remote, fairly remote and yet very clear. The sun blazing down with a sinister force. The colorful clarity on land promising.

Wednesday, April 8. Tunis. My head full of last night's nocturnal impressions. Art—nature—ego. Then an automobile trip in the environs of the city. Violent sirocco, clouds, subtlest definition of the colors. Nothing painfully bright as at home.

Street with Cart. Pen drawing, 1912.



Beyond, a large lake which is said to dry out in summer. A little of the atmosphere of the desert—menacing. Such sultriness produces downpours at home. We walk a bit. First into a park with very curious plantings. Green—yellow—terracotta. The tone of it penetrates and will stick even without my getting it down in paint.

Easter Sunday, April 12. The evening is indescribable. On top of all else the full moon rises. Louis urges me to paint it. I say it will be at most an exercise. Naturally I fail, confronted with nature in this guise. But I have learned, know a little more than before. I know the extent of my inability to reach nature. That is an inner matter for the years to come. I am not at all depressed about it. One must not hurry if one wants to achieve so much. The evening is deep inside me, and there forever. Many a blond moonrise of the north will serve as a muted reflection, reminding me gently and reminding me again and again. That image will be my sweetheart, my other self. A guide to finding myself. But I myself am the moonrise of the South.

Thursday, April 16. An evening of colors as tender as they are clear. Happy hour. Louis sees all sorts of coloristic delicacies and urges me to catch them because, he says, I can do that so precisely. I am letting the work go now. It penetrates into me

so deeply and mildly; I feel that and become certain of what I am doing without having to work hard. Color holds me. I do not need to reach out to snatch it. It holds me forever—I know that. That is the meaning of this happy hour: color and I are one. I am a painter.

Wednesday, April 22. Arrived in Milan at six in the morning. No doubt about it, Europe began here. At eight-fifteen set out in the Lötschberg train. Frequent stops on Lake Maggiore not unpleasant. I find myself pleased and entertained by this landscape. The sight of the doll-like islands: toys in a washbasin. But pretty, so very pretty. Tiny houses and trees taking their baths. Then the train branches off to another little lake, blue water with red shores. Not bad! And then the scenery becomes Alpine and somewhat somber. The Lake of Thun is sweet as a forget-me-not.

That same day (April 22) Klee wrote to his wife:

The cherries are blossoming by the Lake of Thun; the beechwoods are singing in vigorous violets; the lake is a gentle turquoise. The homelike mixture also has its sensational aspects.

The First World War left a strong mark on Klee's life, too. In March, 1916, he became a soldier. Even in those spirit-killing times my father found hours when he could paint. How much the country and its landscapes meant to him then is indicated by the notes in his diary. In July, 1916, he recorded (No. 1008):

Making the rounds of a group of munitions magazines offered fine opportunity for becoming lost in leisurely meditations. In addition, fabulous late-summer flowers stimulated my sense of color by day, and at night and before dawn there stretched above me a firmament that carried the soul off into vast spaces.

Klee had had a fairly safe post at the Schleissheim aviation school. On December 4, 1916, however, he conducted a shipment of matériel to the front, going by way of Cologne into Belgium and France.

We are deep in Belgium. Countryside cut up by hedgerows and ditches; unfortunately didn't see it by daylight. Between Liège and Namur, involuntary halt late at night. Dawn came just outside of Namur. Along the Meuse, where tiny steamers in narrow canals struggle to pull scows. Charleroi, artistic slag heaps, out of a fable, coal, the walls, African, day-goblinesque. Toward Thuin and Lobbes natural beauty once more. The delicate tones of France gently beginning. La douce France. What a reunion! Shattering. Coming from the north, by a sinister way, and not going to

the heart! Illegal. Mild, sunny day. Cattle pasturing peacefully, black and white cows. Carmine cows.

On January 7, 1917, Klee undertook a similar journey to the North Sea coast. Here is his pithy description of this bleak region:

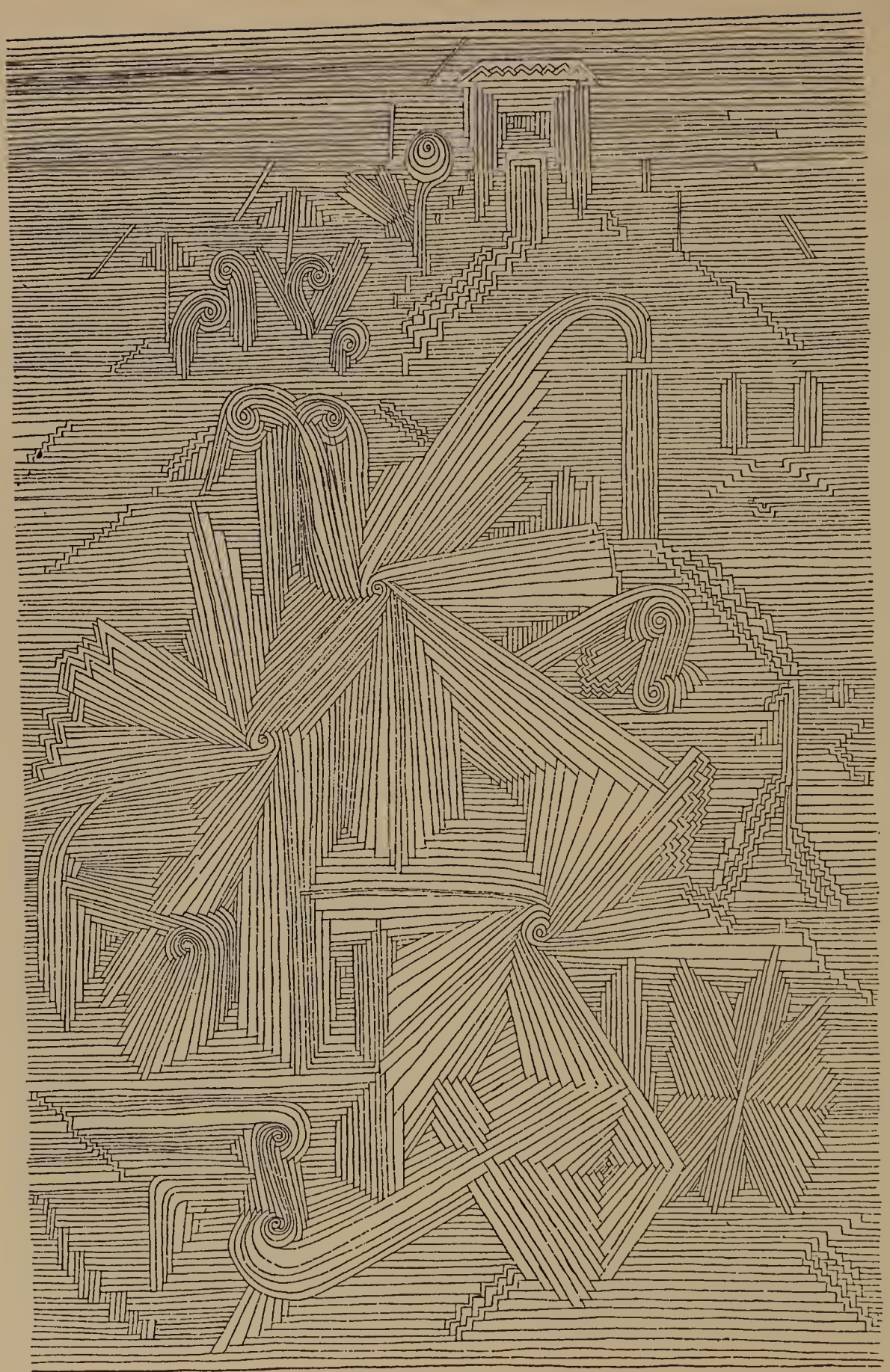
It is four o'clock. I walk down to the port and look at the locks. At the lighthouse and at the radio station, an eerie view out over the North Sea. There was acute misfortune in this manifestation of nature. Utter hopelessness. A frightful wind that can only bring evil. Deep, icy fear plucks at me.

With the squad for unloading machines, I go out later in a violent storm and ostentatiously look on. In walking around, the region frightens me once more. It looks like the end of the world here. Impossible to love, but there is nothing weakening about all this godforsakenness. Anyone who wants to add something to himself should come here. I shall manage to assimilate it.

On September 9, 1917, Klee wrote to Lily from Gersthofen near Augsburg, where he held the post of paymaster's assistant at Aviation School 5 (he was to remain there until the end of the war):

In general, conditions here fairly tolerable, when one has no responsibility; one settles things with oneself, and that's it. And there are compensations for every unpleasantness; I was able to go out from noon on. The day was slightly misty, the light the way I like it, and I went toward Langweid, down to the meadows by the river, which had already consoled me at Whitsuntide for what I have been through. In the loneliest neighborhood I unpacked my water-color box and set to work. By evening I had five water colors, three of them really good, so that even I find them moving. The last one, painted at evening, contained completely the tone of the wonders all around me; it is at once altogether abstract and altogether this Lechau area. At the end I felt the same kind of gratification as if I were on furlough. These days are not easy, but full of revelations. If life goes on calmly I wonder whether my art will shoot up as rapidly as it did in 1916-17. A passionate forward movement in the way of transfiguration is, after all, partly a product of outward experience.

After a furlough spent in Munich, Klee took the train to Augsburg. From there it was a six-mile walk to the Aviation School at Gersthofen. He wrote to Lily about this tramp on January 3, 1918.



Botanical Garden, Section for Plants with Stellate Leaves. *Pen drawing, 1926.*

Then I set out in good time, with all sorts of happy thoughts about the past ten lovely days. Outside of Augsburg, darker feelings came to me, influenced by the snowy wastes and the falling dusk. Since this quality in the landscape intensified rather than diminished, I did not become any cheerier. Kyrie eleison was my leitmotiv. Things were a little jollier at Gersthofen. Then a snowstorm began which covered me with a shell of powdered sugar on one side. The crucifix loomed black and hostile on my right.

I have spoken at the beginning of this book of my father's other travels between the two world wars. They were a constant source of new stimuli and impressions, and often affected his works.

I want to mention particularly his stay on the North Sea island of Baltrum in September, 1923. This rough and inhospitable island inspired a number of Klee's most wonderful water colors. Some of these contain exact impressions of nature; in others these impressions are transmuted to almost abstract forms. But taken all together, they immortalize the island with its strong winds, merciless surf, tiny houses, and wonderful flora growing in wind-sheltered dips among the dunes.

Yet Klee was just as sensitive to all the timbres of a familiar landscape. On May 17, 1930, he wrote Lily about a walk he had taken in the immediate vicinity of our Dessau house:

Today after the painting class, which stopped at seven sharp, I was still enterprising enough to tramp to the lake. The evening was wonderful. Everything is different again, the meadows in full bloom. I love this kind of country far more than the famous Stuegerder Ländle. A little thing like the town park here is much more spiritual than the lanes of gigantic trees there. Yet I can scarcely say why. This week I want to go to Wörlitz again—alone, if possible—to enjoy the great art there once more without being distracted.

In August, 1930, Klee went on a trip to Italy alone. He wrote to Lily from Viareggio on August 24:

The Bernina route, say what you will, is so impressive that everything else dwindles. That isn't true at all for Gletsch, which I hope you've taken; the Schöllenen Ravine is unrivaled too. Now about myself: I have done with the mountains; the hills of Carrara can be seen at some distance, but they don't really count. Everything right here is flat. By the sea, you know, mountains are much inclined to draw the horizon out.

On August 27, 1930, Klee wrote to Lily:

The life here, utterly at the mercy of the power of the sea, the forest and the intense climate, is inexpressible. I haven't any idea of how many days pass; it is more a tranquil standing still than a movement—that is an approximation of what the life here is like. In an access of energy I went looking for a shop that looked as if it would have mosquito netting. With the usual mistakes I communicated and received the tulla verso i zanzare. Then I needed thread, and tried to think where I would buy such a thing at home in Dessau. Immediately, the idea came: cartoleria. Now to work. First the framework of thread and then, which isn't as simple as it might seem, the mounting of the net.

When Klee had to leave Düsseldorf and return to Bern in 1933, he was so sure of his art that he was able to work up the subalpine landscape better than thirty years before. I remember so well an incisive comment my father made about the part of Switzerland north of the Alps: "Too much greenery around here for me." Rich, scarcely variable greens cause many painters great difficulties. Yet how boldly Klee confronted the problem in 1938, in the painting *Green Terrain*. With careful deliberation he placed two yellow sections in the lower left of this painting, while in the upper right, as "counterpoint," he painted a strong, glowing blue. Only three years earlier Klee had painted the curious *The Landscape at the Beginning*. Here we see emerging out of a void the first traces of a landscape still to be formed.

On April 25, 1933, Klee sent Lily a little report about a bus trip he had taken from Bern, a "random excursion," such as Swiss bus companies offer:

The random destination proved to be in the direction of Interlaken. Going, we drove by way of Hilterfinger, Beatusstrasse, and returned by way of Spiez. Both shores were adorned with fresh green and, most of the way, with cherry blossoms.

On Ascension Day, 1939, Klee wrote to Lily from Bern:

Even an outing to Dählhölzli was tempting. The green of the beeches at this time, though, is an altogether professional affair and not so restful for me as the Bern arcades.

17. Physiognomy

All his life Paul Klee was intensely interested in people's faces. In innumerable drawings he sought to catch the grimaces and mimicry of an actor, the good and evil, humanness and inhumanness of facial expression. Even his fish wear human expressions—I refer to the inspired fish paintings he created around the turn of the century, in moods of mordant satire; how slyly the fish triumphs over the angler as it neatly takes the worm off the hook. His school notebooks abound in lively caricatures: teachers with running noses, painters, gypsies and robbers with flowing beards and oversized hats; and opera singers with gullets frightfully distended as they warble their arias. Yet how this aspect of Klee's work deepened between 1900 and 1905! His series of early etchings clearly shows this development. How withdrawn, how dangerous, is the human expression in *Threatening Head*, an etching done in 1905. In the *Virgin in the Tree* the lady's expression is an eloquent reproach to fate.

Klee's list of works for the year 1924 contains a group of six works devoted to the theme of physiognomy:

Physiognomy of a Planting; Physiognomy of Turbidity; Physiognomic Crystallization; Physiognomy in the Manner of a Small Portrait; Mystic=Physiognomic; Physiognomy of a Dream.

From these titles we can see how Klee extended the meaning of physiognomy to include abstract concepts. He attacked the weaknesses of his fellow men with humor, irony and lucid observation.

In the "Felix Calendar" which I have mentioned earlier Klee recorded his observations on his son's facial expressions.

In September, 1909, for example, he wrote:

He jokes by squinting and wiping his mouth and trying to whistle and being unable to, for laughing. If nobody laughs, he extorts laughter by laughing excessively himself. An actor.

Here is another selection of titles bearing upon physiognomy.

Vexation; A Sailor Feels the End Is Near; Thoughts of Persecution; And Suppose It Does Come?; I Had a Chance Then; Not on Your Life; Gone, But Not Without a Trace; Why Are They Looking at Me Like That?; Fat and Princely; Silly and Yet Kingly; A Character Hardens.

18. Architecture

My father always took enormous pleasure in urban architecture. When he was a little boy his grandmother in Nuremberg had given him a toy called the "Nuremberg Castle." This castle was made up of parts which could be rearranged into a multitude of shapes. Perhaps this childhood game was at the root of his lasting interest in architecture. For even as a child he had loved to make pretty drawings of houses and cities. The theme continued to occupy him in his maturity. Along with naturalistic sketches done during vacation trips and art tours he also created—usually later on, when he was back in his studio—magnificent architectonic fantasies. His trips to Italy, and especially his trip to Tunis in 1914, greatly enriched this aspect of his art. The Oriental building style with its cubes and domes delighted Klee to the very end of his life. In addition, the Bauhaus in Weimar was a source of inspiration, for he had architects at work right next door to his studio.

He commented in his diary (No. 429):

In Italy I understood the architectonic element in art—at that time I was feeling my way toward abstract art—today I would call it the constructivistic element. My nearest and at the same time highest goal will henceforth be to merge architectonic with poetic painting, or at least to establish a concord between them.

And in December, 1903, he wrote (No. 536):

When I learned to grasp architectural works of art in Italy, I instantly found that I had gained enormously in insight. Even though the products are utilitarian, this art has remained of a more consistent purity than any other branch of art. Its spatial organism has been the most wholesome kind of school for me; I mean that in the purely formal sense, for I am talking in sheer professional terms; professionalism is a necessary stage on the way to higher achievements. Architecture provides a swifter education for the stupid beginner than pictures or "nature"—because all the proportions and design elements are obviously calculable. Once the student understands the numerical aspect of design, he can tackle nature studies more easily and more correctly. The richness of nature, of course, is far greater and more generous because of the infinite complexities.

What a contrast to the nobility of Italian architecture were the many sketches and water colors that Klee did in the suburbs of Munich before 1914. There he was enamored of the distinctly ugly; the barbarous Hohenzollern architecture of the

Not on Your Life! Pencil drawing, 1939.



nineteenth-century builders' boom; the loud, brick-red Church of St. Ursula, a parody of Italian models; the apartment buildings looming up out of a dreary plain, and the few miserable trees of the Oberwiesenfeld drill ground. It took the experience of Tunis to wrench Klee out of this infatuation with the drab. He recorded his reactions in his diary on April 15, 1914:

Soon the new splendor of this country took hold of us again. Aḳouda, a fabulous city, sweeps past us, an image that perhaps will last a lifetime. At two o'clock, Kairouan. A small French suburb with two hotels. Thirst for tea generously quenched, in order to be able to explore the wonder of Kairouan with dignity. First a stupendous tumult. Nothing individual, just the whole. And what a whole! Extract of the Arabian Nights, contents 99 per cent reality. What an aroma, how penetrating, how intoxicating, and at the same time clarifying. Building and inebriation. Sweet-scented woods burning. Home?

Coming back from Africa, Klee passed through Naples on his way to Switzerland. He was deeply moved at seeing this favorite city again. But he felt that he could not stay. He touches on this in his diary on April 21, 1914:

Napoli, which I was so delighted with a dozen or so years ago, bobs up. It bobs up out of slightly misted air, the Posilipo clearest of all, and then the whole amphitheater of buildings. What a city! It comes closer, much too quickly, and then I must continue on. For it must not be forgotten that I am not on an Italian journey this time! I have been in the Orient and I must now stay there.

Here is a small selection of characteristic architectural titles from Klee's middle period:

Movement of Gothic Halls; Movement of Vaults; Secular Buildings with Celestial Relations; Architecture, Transparent-Structural; Architecture, Yellow-Violet stepped Cubes; Fortified Port City; City on Two Hills; Great Plaza in T.; Uncomposed in Space.

19. War and Catastrophe

In Paul Klee's entire output we find fifty works which deal with themes of war and catastrophe. *Affected Place* clearly points to a war experience. The red clouds in the water color *Cloud Formation over Bor* also convey a sense of menace. Even objects can be infected by human emotions, as Klee shows in his *The Fear of the Ships*. The drawing *Man and Animal Dying Together* is a strong evocation of the horrors of the battlefield. In the terribly stirring picture *Struck from the List*, Klee expressed what he felt about his enforced exile in 1933. The situation had shaken and depressed him—at one stroke the psychological ground had been swept from under his feet—and he painted his mood of despair into his work. Then, when the catastrophic policies of the Nazi rulers led, as they were bound to, to the Second World War, a good many of Klee's works, painted in his old and now newly dis-

Fortified Port City. Reed pen drawing, 1927.

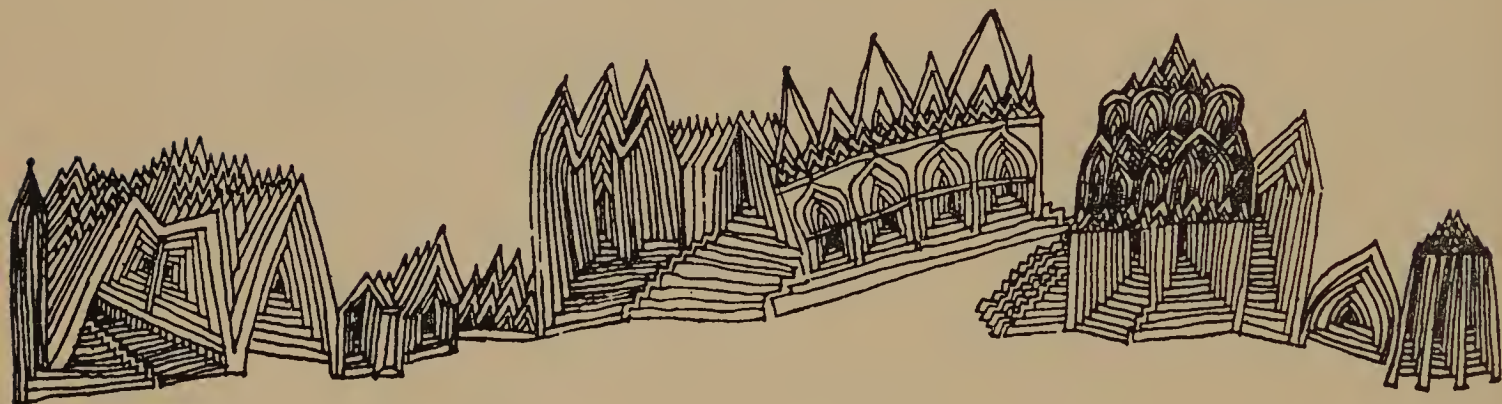


covered homeland, reflected the successive stages of disaster. The panel *Conflagration*, done in 1939, is a terrifying vision of many burning cities.

Let us return once more to 1914. The peaceful National Fair in Bern had not yet shut its doors when the First World War broke out. Klee's reaction to the war differed sharply from that of many of his contemporaries. In his diary (No. 952), he wrote:

I have long had this war in me. Therefore it does not concern me inwardly. In order to work myself up out of my ruins, I had to fly. And I flew. I remain in that shattered world only in memory, as one does now and then in retrospect. In that sense I am "abstract with memories."

Rock Temple. Pen drawing, 1927.



A short while later, Klee wrote (No. 956):

At the beginning what the war meant to me was rather physical in nature: that blood was flowing nearby. That my own body might be endangered, without which there is no soul. The idiotically singing reservists in Munich. The bewreathed victims. The first sleeve rolled up to the elbow, held by a safety pin. The one Bavarian-blue leg taking long strides between two crutches. The realization of the letter of the history books. The coming to life of old picture books. Even though no Napoleon appeared, only a lot of puny imitators. The whole thing had as much mentality attached to it as a smear of filth on the heel of a shoe.

After two years of war the Bavarian military authorities remembered the conscript Paul Klee. With mixed feelings, my father went off to war on March 11,

1916, after his dearest friends August Macke and Franz Marc had already been killed. Klee noted in his diary:

A fateful year. At the end of January, Louis Moilliet's wife died giving birth to a boy. On March 4, my friend Franz Marc was killed at Verdun. On March 11, I was drafted for military service, a thirty-five-year-old conscript.

At first Klee was stationed in Landshut on the Isar. I still have sharp memories of our visits to this city. I remember its arcades, my father's blue uniform with its shiny copper buttons, and his *Krätzchen*, the visorless cap he wore. At her first sight of my father on the platform of the Landshut railroad station, Mother exclaimed impulsively: "Why, you look just like a criminal!" What Klee himself felt about his soldierly appearance can be surmised from the little note he wrote his sister on the back of a photo of himself in uniform:

Landshut

April 13, 1916

Dear Mathilde,

Now that I've lost every ounce of fat and have mentally adjusted, the World War might just as well end, as far as I'm concerned. But it doesn't seem to be in any hurry. Let's give it another few months. You say you'd like to have my likeness in the new costume? No sooner said than done—but will it be allowed to cross the border? Did you receive the squad photo? But I look much more military in the helmet!

Best wishes to you all, and give Mama and Papa greetings from your military brother.

My father's situation became somewhat critical when he was transferred from Landshut to Munich on July 20, 1916. Klee informed Mother of his whereabouts in this note, the text of which he entered into his diary (No. 1006):

My dearest Lily,

For the present I am in the Max Secondary School, Second Reserve Infantry Regiment, First Replacement Company. The others are stationed at an inn, the Grosser Wirt; we are in the gymnasium of the school. Contrary to all expectations, it is already half past four, and they are only just beginning on the clothing issue. It may well be a long time before it's my turn. So it isn't likely that I'll see the two of you today. One must apply to the company chief for the privilege of sleeping outside. Have patience till I come. The quarters are practical and spacious. Wait, wait, wait. Greetings to all.

My mother did everything in her power to keep Father from being transferred to the front. She ran from pillar to post. Her chief point with the authorities was that Father's health was none too good. Wildermann and Max Pulver were particularly effective in aiding Mother's campaign. Pulver tells the story in his memoirs of Paul Klee (*Kunstwerk*, 1949, No. 4):

I often saw Klee drilling on the meadow in front of my house. His military demeanor was really not very convincing. Sometimes, when his group was allowed a rest, he would quickly come over to the fence and exchange a few words with me. Now, however, the situation had become serious. The silliness, the absurdity of his having been passed as fit for regular service, was helpful to me. The King and his son Rupprecht had secretly given instructions that the talented artists of Munich were to be exempted, for Weissgerber, Franz Marc and others had already fallen, some of them in ways that made no sense at all. I happened to know about these orders. A few visits and hints were sufficient. On the eve of his "dispatch" to the front Paul Klee was detailed to Schleissheim. I had succeeded in saving him. . . .

Paul Klee was profoundly affected by the death of Franz Marc, his best friend. We find in his diary (No. 1008) the following "confession":

If I say who Franz Marc is, I must at the same time confess who I am, for much in which I have taken part pertained to him.

He is more human than I; his affections are warmer, more pronounced. He responds to animals in human terms, raising them to his own level. Unlike me, he does not need to dissolve himself in the universe in order to feel that he stands on the same plane as animals, plants and stones. In Marc earthiness comes before identification with the cosmos. I do not say that he might not have developed in the latter direction, and yet, if that were one of his potentialities: why did he die?

There was a Faustian, an unredeemed element in him. He was eternally questioning. Is it true? The words "false doctrine" were forever on his lips. But he lacked the quiet confidence of faith. Lately I began to fear that some day he would become a wholly different man.

Changing times depressed him; he felt that men ought to change with them. For he himself was still human, and a remnant of struggle fettered him. The bourgeois Empire, the last state of society in which the good was still common property, seemed to him enviable.

I always try to align myself only with God, and if I have a kinship with God, I don't worry about the fact that my brothers do not also have a kinship with me; that is their affair.

But Marc had a womanlike urge to be able to impart some of his riches to all. The fact that everyone did not follow him filled him with doubts about his course. I was afraid that after the ferment he would turn back to earthy simplicity; that instead of helping to rouse this world in absolutistic ways, he would return to it entirely, out of a philanthropic impulse.

My fire is more akin to the dead or the unborn. No wonder that people responded to him with more affection. He had a warm, noble sensuousness which drew people to him. Marc still belonged to the human race; he was not a neutral creature. I well recall his smile when earthy elements escaped my eye.

Art is like creation, and remains as valid on the last as on the first day.

On August 12, 1916, Klee was transferred to Schleissheim. Again, his note to my mother reporting this change was copied into his diary (No. 1014):

Address Engineer Klee, Air Force Replacement Section, Schleissheim, Workshop Company. What a disappointment. You did not come. Now I hope for Sunday. Met Stubenvoll, promised to help. Only sleeping away from base not allowed. Will you find a place to stay? The whole town is said to be crammed with fliers. We'll see. I am set to varnishing wings. Not exactly dangerous work. But what an adventure, suddenly becoming a factory worker! And the garb! Yours, Paul.

Meanwhile my mother and I had returned from Switzerland. We saw Father every weekend; either he came to see us in Munich or else, if no furloughs were being given, we went to Schleissheim. Klee rented a room in a wretched little peasant house by the Dachau Canal, and there he spent every free minute he had. Here is one of his letters to his mother from that spot:

Schleissheim

October 12, 1916

Dear Mama,

Warm thanks for your dear card. Felix and Lily recently descended upon me at my room; it was a great surprise suddenly to see the gangling fellow before me. He looks strong, and I want to thank you both for taking such good care of him, especially Mathilde, of course, who went to so much trouble.

Lily certainly undertook a tremendous number of things for so short a time. She came back very refreshed; it did her good to get out for a while, out of the huge fortress this country has become.

I did not even need that; a few days of furlough are sufficient for me. One learns to make modest demands. Thank God I haven't suffered any deprivation in that respect. Tomorrow I start on a short furlough of five or six days. I must color

Death on the Battlefield. Pen drawing, 1914.



eighty copies of a lithograph for the publisher Goltz. Then I have to have my photograph taken for a Sturm postcard—they say I'm already that famous. And besides I must catch my breath a little. Some of the maintenance work is extremely monotonous.

The Hausenstein book, Die bildende Kunst der Gegenwart, is supposed to have been reviewed in a Swiss (Basel) newspaper, and I hear that a good many things were said about and against me. I would be very grateful to Mathilde if she could obtain the issue. Possibly the article will prove of greater concern to Moilliet. I must have that review for my collection. Perhaps Mathilde could write to the Basler Nachrichten and ask for the issue with the above-mentioned review. And then send it to me registered. How are you? Lily tells me that you go out more often and also take part in teas, with the new carriage. That must liven things up for you.

Keep well, and give Papa and Mathilde and Aunt Luise my warm greetings.

Yours,

Paul

In the middle of January my father was transferred to Gernsthofen, near Augsburg. That made visits much more difficult. When no furloughs were given, Mother and I would go by train to Augsburg, staying at the *Drei Kronen*. Later, Klee evaded the "no furlough" orders by changing into civilian clothes and coming to Munich illegally. He mentions one such occasion in his diary (No. 1105):

February 4, 1918. The whole disguise adventure went smoothly. Then I got back into my ragged costume-ball field-gray, which looks so absurd on me, and the long, long carnival resumed. The weather was alarmingly foggy, but I wanted to have nothing to do with ghosts. Once again, as so often on these walks, I saw phantom fireworks, but I fended off all emotional crescendos. The stops at a chapel and various crosses had no spookiness—nothing sensational, as they say in carnival language. The only part I enjoyed was my brief guest performance at home.

In the summer of 1917, Mother and I were able to go to Bern for a vacation again. The following card came from Father on August 14:

My beloved Lily,

The news from Switzerland always interests me keenly. I'd already imagined that Lulu might not be doing well. If only one could exhibit a series of fine water colors at Walden's. His name is well known, after all, but she must still make her way. What does Louis have to say, what is he up to? Has he done any painting this year, or just been readin' and so on? I want to know about such things in much more detail! Of course I'm all for lots of postcards, but now and then a more elaborate missive would be nice. You're experiencing so much, you know, and I so little, outwardly. And what goes on inside is all reserved for art, all put to use solely for production. Hausmann's visit on Sunday was very good for me; such rare contacts leave me greatly refreshed. Not that I would or could voice my own opinion, but my work benefits from the light he sheds.

Love and many greetings to all.

*Yours,
Paul*

Klee was to stay at the Gersthofen base for almost two years. The Swabian-Bavarian plateau country has a bleak, inhospitable air, but there are the lovely meadows of the Lech River for contrast. Klee used to go there to paint in the open air; there he did those small, magical water colors full of arrows and flashes of lightning, flowers and birds. Airplanes in those days were covered with a specially prepared canvas; properly sized, this material served Klee as an ideal painting base.

Wartime Port. *Pen drawing, 1915.*



We may therefore be grateful to destiny that in the midst of war it provided Klee with such a peaceful island where he was able to pursue his work.

After his Christmas furlough in 1918, my father decided categorically that he was going to return to civilian life. The war had been over for almost two months, and he had not yet been demobilized. He concluded that year's diary with the humorous notation:

Take my Christmas furlough from the hands of the brass and then . . . off I go like Leporello. . . .

He drew a little sketch summing up his military service in Gersthofen. It shows him lying on an army cot in his barrack. In the upper left hand corner he wrote the lines:

*Alone I recline
You monster bores
My heart is yours
My heart is thine.*

PART THREE: *Teaching at the Bauhaus*

When Kandinski proclaimed his new approach to art in *The Art of Spiritual Harmony*, the ensuing discussion rocked the entire community of artists. Marc published his manifestos in the *Blue Rider*, and somewhat later Klee was asked to set forth his ideas. He thereupon wrote the following essay which is both a treatise on graphic art and a first version of his *Creative Credo*. In it his entire philosophy is already comprehended. The essay was written, along with other notes and drafts of letters, in a small black oilcloth-covered notebook (now in the possession of the Paul Klee Foundation). It was published for the first time in facsimile reproduction by Klipstein and Kornfeld, Bern, in December, 1956.

I.

Since graphic art tends of its own accord to abstraction, it is only natural that it should be receiving higher appreciation today. From the first it can present the object in a more patterned, more imaginative, more nonobjective manner, and hence with incomparably greater precision than any other form of art. The more purely we work graphically, that is to say, the more we accept the elements underlying graphic art, the less equipped we are for a realistic representation of things. A prestidigitator, of course, violating the elements, will create certain illusions. But that is no longer pure art, because it is at the expense of the real elements. Pure art arises when the element of design and the expression of the formal organism are in real correspondence with the spirit of the content. And in any organism the parts stand in a logical proportion to the whole. Small integers underlie the proportion.

We should not be misled into thinking, for example, that the picture of a naked man is organic only because the fingers are in correct proportion to the hands, the hands to the forearm and biceps, and so on. That is another side of art; it can, however, serve as an example of how to achieve analogous results when we are working with pure elements of form.

II.

The formal elements of graphic art are dot, line, plane and space, the last three charged with energy of various kinds. A planar element is not composed of dots and lines. Rather it comes about when we use a blunt crayon with unvarying intensity. An example of a spatial element would be a cloudlike, misty dab of a full brush, applied with varying intensities. As has already been suggested, dots and lines placed in relationship to one another can also generate planar and spatial shapes.

Let us develop these principles by taking a little jaunt into the land of better insight. Our first act is to move beyond the lifelessness of the dot. Soon we stop to catch our breath. This is rendered by a broken line, or one articulated by repeated stops. We look back to see how far we have come. This is "countermovement." We pause and consider the paths in various directions—this gives us a sheaf of lines. A river gets in our way and we must use a boat. This is a wavy line. Further upstream there might be a bridge: series of curves. Across the river we meet someone who shares our views, who also wishes to reach greater insight. For a while we are in agreement about everything down to the smallest detail: this is convergence. But agreement will soon cease: divergence. Soon we are all flustered, though he more than I: difference in expressiveness of two lines. We cross a freshly plowed field: plane traversed by lines. Then a forest. My companion loses his way, looks here and there, and even sniffs the ground like a hunting dog.

I too am no longer so cool-headed. There is another river and a thick mist rising above the bottomlands: "spatial element." By and by the atmosphere clears somewhat. We encounter some basket weavers: texture of lines. They have a baby with them, with lovely curly hair: corkscrew motif. Later on it grows sultry and dark: spatial element. A flash of lightning on the horizon: zigzag line. But there are still stars overhead: scattered dots. Soon we come to an inn and put up for the night. Before we fall asleep a good many memories bob to the surface, for a little walking tour of this sort is full of impressions: all sorts of lines, dots, dabs, smooth planes, planes animated by dabs, cross-hatchings; wavy movements, articulated and obstructed movements, countermovements, textures, tissues, masonry effects, scales, solo lines, duet lines, lines fading out and lines that gain strength because they are in the fog—dynamism. The blithe evenness of the first stretch, then the inhibitions, the uncertainty. Faint tremblings; the caresses of cool breezes. At the approach of the thunderstorm, the sudden buzz of gadflies. Fury. Killing. The aim in view as a guideline, even in the underbrush, even in the dusk. Fortunately the night did not descend too soon. Anxiety. Fear comes seldom. Keep healthy, don't take on too many burdens. The lightning flash reminded me of the fever chart of a sick child, some years ago. I felt fear, then. Now we sleep. Tomorrow we continue.

III.

I defined the concept of element as something integral in itself. We enrich the formal harmony by using structures composed of elements, as for example surfaces represented by lines entering into relationships—the view of flowing streams, for instance. Or else we may proceed from dots to lines, or create spatial structures out of lines and dots in third-dimensional relationships—for example, fish darting past, above and below one another. In this way the organism becomes more richly articulated, and the number of potential variations becomes infinite.

IV.

Movement underlies the growth and decay of all things. In Lessing's Laokoon, which in our piety we still go on tormenting our brains over, a great fuss is made about the difference between temporal and spatial art. But look more closely into the matter and the whole problem turns out to be a pedant's delusion. For space too is a temporal concept.

When a dot begins to move and becomes a line, the process takes time; likewise, when a line is displaced and becomes a surface; likewise when moving surfaces become spaces. Is a work of pictorial art created all at once? Not at all—it is built up bit by bit, just like a house. How long does it take to build a house? And what about the beholder—is he finished with the work at one glance? Unfortunately, he often is. Feuerbach has remarked that to understand a picture, a chair is needed. Why a chair? So that the mind will not be distracted by tired legs. And what usually makes legs tired? Prolonged standing. So the mind needs space in which to spread itself—in other words, time.

Character is movement. Only the dot is timeless, and in itself it is lifeless. The universe, too, is all movement. On earth stasis is a chance obstruction of matter. It is an illusion to take this cessation of movement as primary.

The Scripture story of Creation is an excellent parable of movement. The work of art, too, is primarily creation; it is never experienced as a mere product.

A creative fire flares, is transmitted by the hand, flashes to the canvas, and on the canvas a spark leaps up to the eye, forming the third dimension, and then, closing the circle, returns to its source.

The essential activity of the beholder is also temporal. He moves part after part into his retina. In order to fix upon a new section, he must abandon the old one. Sooner or later he stops, and takes his leave, like the artist. If what he saw was enjoyable and promises more enjoyment, if he thinks it was worthwhile, he comes back—exactly as the artist does.

In the work of art paths are made for the eye of the beholder which moves along from patch to patch like an animal grazing. In music there are channels conducting sound to the ear; in the drama there are both sight and sound. The work of art arose out of movement, is itself congealed movement, and is perceived by movement—the movement of the eye muscles.

The beholder suffers from the disadvantage of being presented with an end-product; as far as the creative process is concerned, he appears to be going at the work the wrong way round. We do wrong to offer him obstacles instead of pleasure. The artist therefore should try for a certain transparent simplicity in the construction of his work of art; but this simplicity must not be confounded with poverty. The artist's sureness, skill and deeper knowledge are in no way at cross purposes with this simplicity. A musical work has the advantage that it is received by the hearer

exactly in the order of its conception; but when it is heard many times, the senses are dulled by the very evenness of the impression. For the nonspecialist a pictorial work has the virtue that the order of its perception may be strongly varied, and thus its ambiguity more richly appreciated.

V.

In the past artists represented things they had seen on earth, things they liked seeing or might have liked to see. Today they reveal the relativity of visible things; they express their belief that the visible is only an isolated aspect in relation to the universe as a whole, and that other, invisible truths are the overriding factors. Things appear to assume a broader and more diversified meaning, often seeming to contradict the rational experience of yesterday. The artist strives to express the essential character of the accidental.

By including the elements of good and evil a moral sphere is created. Evil is viewed not as an enemy whom we conquer or are conquered by, but as a force which has its share in the making of the Whole, an essential factor in creation and evolution. The presence of the masculine principle (evil, disturbing, passionate), and the feminine principle (good, serene, growing), results in the forging of an ethical balance.

Corresponding to this is the dialectic of forms, movement and countermovement, or—if we want to put this in more elementary terms—colorism, as in Delaunay's analysis of forms by color. Every energy calls for its complement, for art is always seeking the equilibrium that arises out of the play of forces, a state in which abstract forms can become meaningful objects, or else pure symbols as constant as numbers and letters of the alphabet. Taken all together, these may become symbols of the cosmos; that is to say, they become a form of religious expression.

A few examples:

1. A sailor of classical antiquity in a boat, greatly pleased with the clever contrivance which such a boat is. The ancients would represent him in those terms. By contrast, modern man strolling over the deck of a steamer is aware of quite other factors:

- 1. His own motion.*
- 2. The motion of the ship, which may be contrary to his.*
- 3. The speed and direction of the current.*
- 4. The rotation of the earth.*
- 5. The earth's motion in its orbit.*
- 6. The orbits of stars and moons around it.*

Resultant: a system of movements in the universe, with the ego on the steamer as the center.

II. *An apple tree in blossom: its character, its roots, the rising sap in its trunk, a cross section with its annual rings, the blossom with its various parts and sexual functions, the fruit, the core with its seeds. The whole is a structure of states of growth.*

III. *A man sleeping: the circulation of his blood, the measured respiration of his lungs, the delicate operations of his kidneys, and in his brain a world of dreams, with all their ties to the powers of destiny. The whole is a structure of functions united in the most peaceful repose.*

Art is a parable of Creation; it is an example, as the terrestrial is an example of the cosmos. But all these matters we have been speaking of are not yet art. The release of the elements, the grouping of them in subdivisions composed of parts, the articulation of the whole by building up several aspects simultaneously, pictorial polyphony, the achievement of equilibrium between the various movements, all higher and still higher questions of form, are vital factors in artistic communication; but they do not in themselves produce art of the highest level. For at that level, mystery begins and the intellect counts for nothing. At the highest level, imagination is guided by instinctual stimuli, and illusions are created which buoy us up and stir us more than do the familiar things of earth. In that realm are born the symbols which comfort the mind, which perceives that it need not be chained to the potentialities of terrestrial things. Up there, ethical seriousness reigns, and along with it impish laughter at the learned apparatus of scholars and parsons.

Neither higher potentiality nor reality can be of any avail to us. Away with everyday things and away with the occult sciences—they are barking up the wrong tree. Art goes beyond both the real and the imaginary object. Art plays an unknowing game with things. Just as a child at play imitates us, so we at play imitate the forces which created and are creating the world.

Art should be at home everywhere, like a fairy tale; and it should know how to deal in good and evil, like the Almighty. To man art should be like a vacation in the country, an opportunity for him to change his point of view and see himself transplanted into a world of diversions which offers only pleasant things, and from which he returns, strengthened, to the routine of daily life. Still more, it should help him put off his shell, to imagine himself God for a few moments, and, remembering the possibility of repeating such a transformation, to look forward to evening after work when the soul sits down at table to nourish its famished nerves and replenish its weary organs with fresh juices. All art should lead to this, both the broad rivers and charming, aphoristic, many-branched rivulet of graphic art.

In 1919, the students of the Stuttgart Academy of Art approached Klee to inquire whether he would accept a professorship there. A letter from one of the students,

Oskar Schlemmer, who was later to become a colleague at the Weimar Bauhaus, describes the course of the negotiations:

Stuttgart
June 23, 1919

Dear Herr Klee:

Your having informed Herr Schl. of your willingness to accept a teaching post in Stuttgart has aroused great enthusiasm among the students concerned, and we shall do all in our power to see to it that the appointment comes through.

The students' petition to the Ministry will be sent off this Wednesday at the latest, and a similar formal request to the professors, who already knew of the project. Furthermore, a press release will be sent out; we are already sure of the backing of the important newspapers. We are asking for a decision before the end of the summer semester—July 15—and until that time we beg you not to make any other commitments. We shall keep you informed of the progress of the affair.

Sincerely yours,
Oskar Schlemmer

Two weeks later Schlemmer sent Klee a progress report:

Stuttgart
July 9, 1919

Dear Herr Klee:

Your letter was exceedingly valuable to me for its statement of your views on teaching. One of the chief criticisms which we are constantly having to contend with is that so dreamy and remote an artist as you "presumably" are would hardly make a teacher equipped to lead the cause of modernity in a city like Stuttgart as forcefully as is necessary. It may be that the gentle approach is the more effective one; there are others, even here in Stuttgart, to take over the job of agitating for the new art. The skeptics also use adjectives like "playful" and "feminine." We reply that the Academy certainly has its share of "strength" in Waldschmidt's monumental muscle-men and Altherr's baroque manner, so that we regard you as the finest kind of contrast to these other men; for that very reason, we have said, you will truly enrich the course of instruction. For the rest, the enclosed copy of the petition to the trustees will indicate what the present state of affairs is. The newspapers are definitely

going to support us; a preliminary notice is to appear in the near future. If we meet with a refusal in your case, as we have already met with one in the case of Hölzel, although the entire student body wanted him on the faculty (the Hölzel case is as good as settled by now), we intend to make a public protest and if necessary stage a strike. But since ours is the good cause and we have certain groups entirely on our side, we hope that we will succeed without a fight.

The result of the mass meeting of the students was communicated to the professors, who then said that they would need additional essays—we had presented only Däubler's article in the *Kunstblatt* and Behne's essay in the *Weisse Blätter*—before they could make a decision. We are including with our petition extracts from your letter, which is eminently suited to answer their doubts.

Furthermore, we want to persuade Dr. Hildebrandt to deliver a lecture, for these people ought to pitch in now. Perhaps Hausenstein could also be enlisted for a lecture.

Tomorrow I am leaving for two weeks in Switzerland—Amden. My friend W. Baumeister will keep you informed and direct the affair here. His address is the same as mine. Studio Building.

Hoping for success, with best greetings,

Oskar Schlemmer

On November 29, 1919, Schlemmer sent Klee the following letter:

Dear Herr Klee:

No doubt you have already received the leaflets. We needed to put them out to justify ourselves; unfortunately, they are only the dying notes of our struggle. The Academy refuses. I am enclosing a copy of this classic document in the history of culture, and with your permission intend to make further use of it. It has been hard for me to come out so bluntly with the verdict; there was still a last hope remaining in the Württemberg Association of the Friends of Art. But a refusal has come from them also. I have been promised an extract of the minutes of the Association's meeting and will let you know what was said. I understand the general sentiment was that the Association, without taking sides on the question of principles of art, was no longer in a position to appoint artists, as used to be the case. In the past the Association was under the patronage of the King, and his word was decisive where appointments were concerned. Today all the organizations of Württemberg artists are represented in the Association, and decisions are dependent on their vote. Moreover, along with the departure of the King a good many financial spon-

sors left the Association, so that its funds are small compared to what they were before the war. However, I don't really believe all those excuses. What it probably comes down to is the increasingly open tendency toward cliquism, and also the stupidity of majority votes in the field of art. It is a question of principles after all.

The Academy decision is much more patently motivated by opposition. Director Altherr, a Swiss incidentally, seems to me the wolf in sheep's clothing in the case. He is said to have taken the firmest stand against you; yet all the while he has been assuring us of his benevolence, of how much he agrees with us and so on. When the bad news came, a students' assembly was called at which I said that the recall of Professor Hölzel, which we students had requested six months ago, was also turned down; the next action by the student body, the request for you, was likewise rejected. Were the students tamely going to accept this? The response was a lively debate and assurances that they were not going to put up with it. The authorities had promised to appoint a modern teacher and they must abide by their promise. In the course of the discussion a new aspect of the matter developed: the majority of the student body is for a new teacher, but only a minority for you. Some said it was not only the business of Hölzel's pupils to determine the teacher, but the business of the entire student body. My friends and I argued firmly against that, and the name of Schinnerer, which was repeatedly brought up, exposed the whole ridiculousness of a procedure which might produce a result of no interest to those who had initiated the movement. Nevertheless, the entire student body is going to post a list of candidates. Of course the authorities will always insist on the first clause of their argument, the point that there is no vacant post. What are we to do? I hear that as soon as I issued the appeal to the students to undertake an action directed against the Academy, the authorities prepared to have me expelled. Of course I don't have much more to lose, since I shall be graduating this winter. Should we try to stage a revolution? There would be a small minority ready to support us; the Academy and the government would show its power and expel us. It would mean a wearing struggle and a great loss of time. And along with all this we have a burning desire to get on with our work. What do you advise?

The Uecht Group is taking the liberty of sending to you a folder which we issued on the occasion of the exhibition, and which is dedicated to you. Some six or eight of your works were sold during the exhibition. Herr Baumeister and I have bought your *Mild Tropical Landscape*, from the *Sturm*. A friend of ours owns your *Dogmatic Construction*, which we intensely admire.

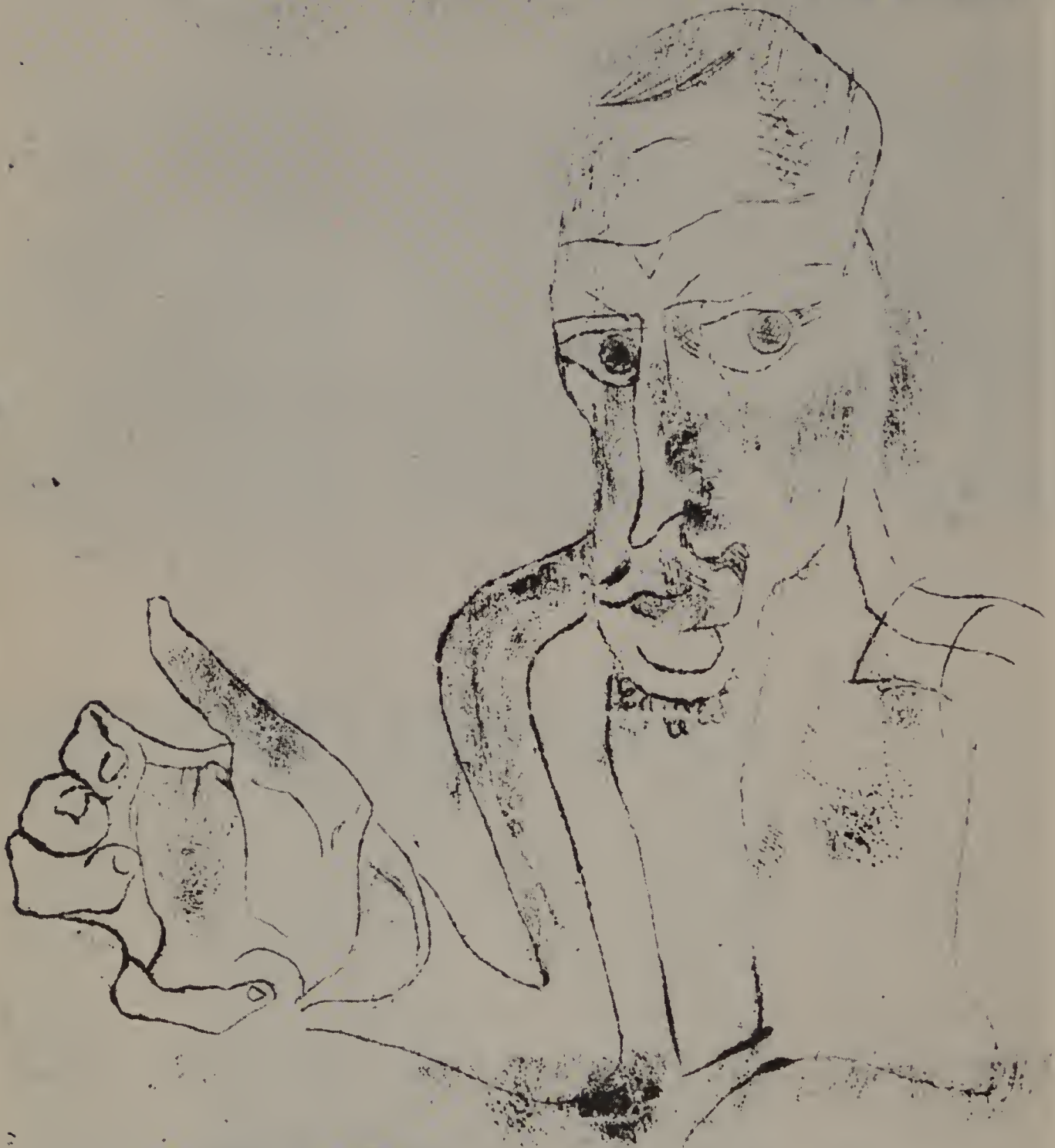
What will you do now? You can imagine how very bad we feel. The only



(Above, left) *Munich, spring, 1916. Taken for the Sturm's postcard by Paula Stockmar.* (Above, center) *Dessau, 1927.* (Above, right) *Dessau, 1930. Passport photo.* (Below, left and right) *Dessau, 1932.*

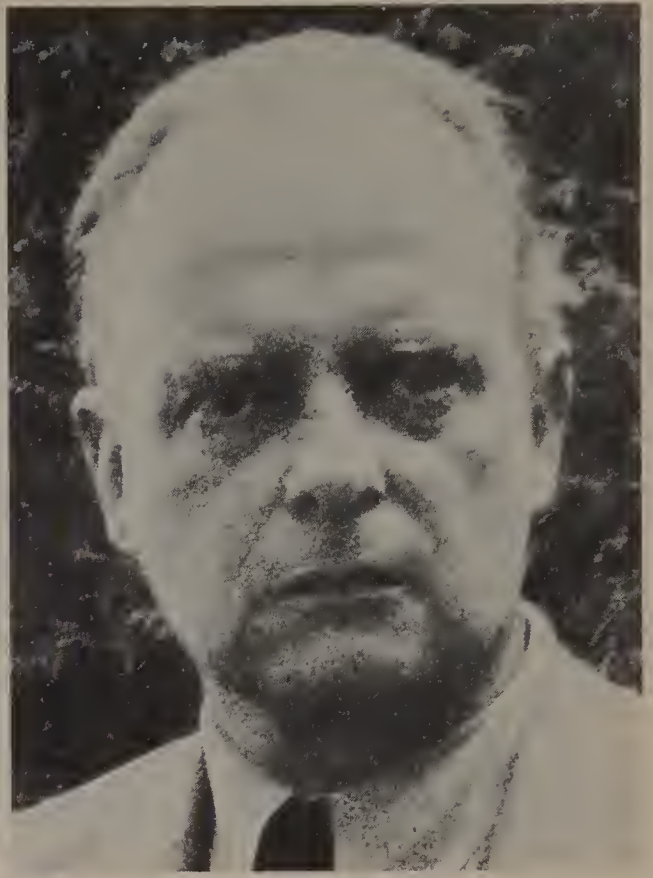
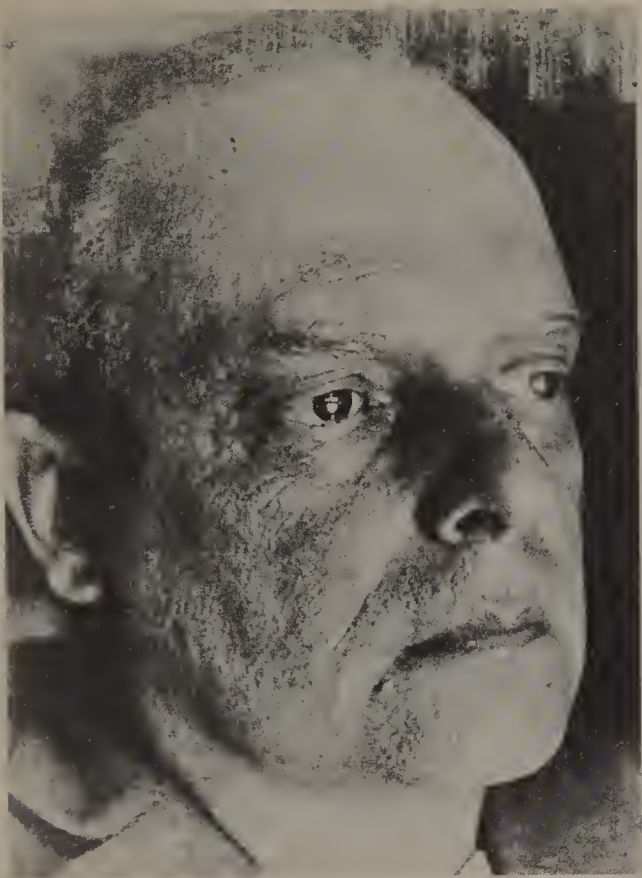


K1/2



1919. 73.

Artist Meditating. *Self-portrait. Original tracing. 1919.*



(Above, left) *Dessau*, 1932. (Above, right) *Bern*, 1935. (Below, left and right) *Bern*, 1939.



Paul Klee in the Bauhaus studio. Weimar, 1925 (above) and 1924 (below).

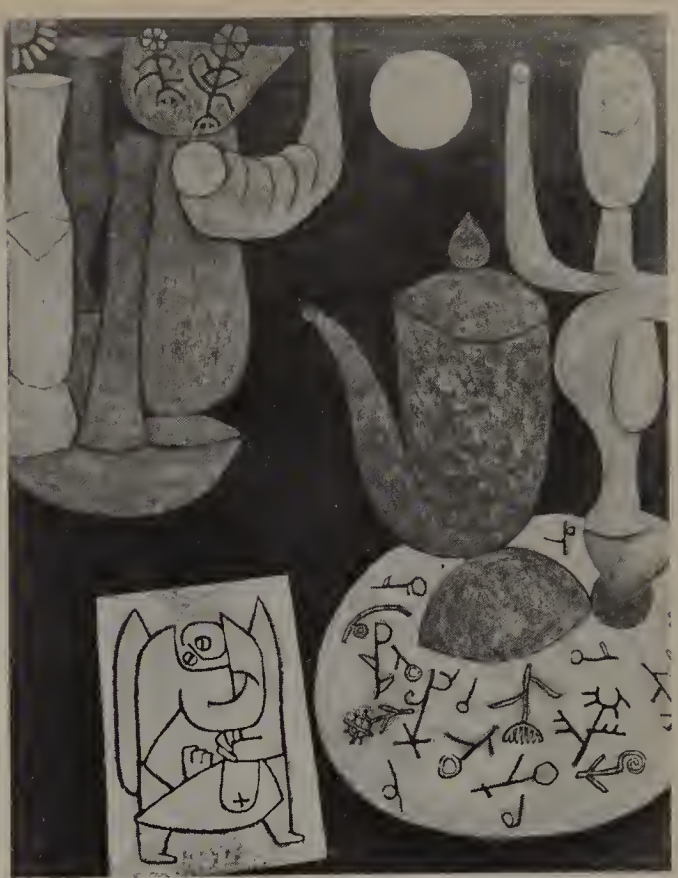
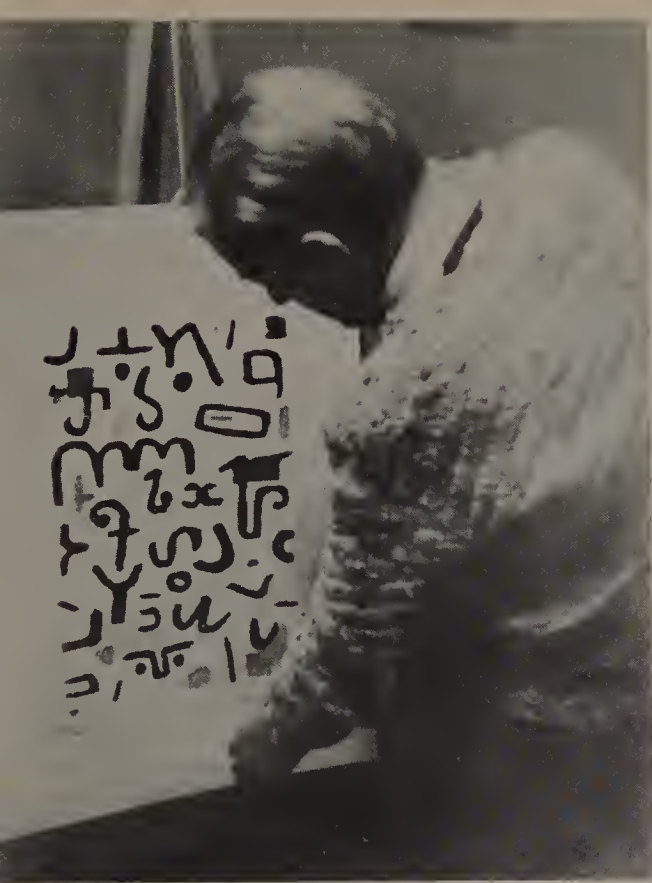


(Above) Paul Klee in Dessau, 1932. (Below, left) Klee's house at Heinrichstrasse 32 in Düsseldorf (where he lived from May 1 to December 22, 1933). (Below, right) Opening of the Bauhaus in Dessau, 1926. From left to right: Kandinski, his wife Nina, Muche, Klee, Gropius.





Paul Klee painting in his studio at Kistlerweg 6, Bern, 1939.



(Above, left) Klee in his studio in Bern studying his painting, Law, 1938. (Above, right) Paul Klee's last oil painting, Still Life, 1940. (Below) Klee in his studio in Bern, 1939.





Paul Klee's last studio at Kistlerweg 6, Bern. Summer, 1938.

hope we have is in the vindication that the next few years are sure to bring. The spirit of your art will remain with us.

Perhaps you will let us know your opinion about the matter. On behalf of my friends I send you warmest greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Oskar Schlemmer.

In 1918, while the war was still going on, the architect Walter Gropius became director of the Ducal School of the Minor Arts in Weimar. Though the outbreak of the revolution forced the reigning duke to abdicate, the farsighted Gropius realized that the proper moment had come to found the Bauhaus. He invented the word by turning *Hausbau* (building or construction of a house) around, and meant his project to include everything having to do with architecture and interior design. To the hordes of young people coming back from the lost war, lacking skills and goals, the new doctrine of handicraft training for creative art proved to be especially attractive. But young people also swarmed to the Bauhaus from abroad. The first members of the faculty were architects. Johannes Itten, a remarkable teacher, took charge of the preliminary course in which the "apprentice" was introduced to the feel of materials. Itten, himself a pupil of Hölzel, proposed bringing in as teachers Schlemmer from Stuttgart, Schreyer from Berlin, Marcks and Klee from Munich. Feininger happened to be in Weimar and likewise joined the "corps of masters." Concerning the appointment of Klee to the Bauhaus, Will Grohmann has written:

The program of the Bauhaus was strenuous. It initiated a long period during which Klee divided his time and energy between creative work and teaching. For thirteen years the disadvantages of this situation were outweighed by the guarantee of a living wage and by the necessity of clarifying in his own mind (in order to be able to explain them to students) artistic procedures which he had hitherto adopted unconsciously. Various quotations from his letters and journal have already demonstrated that Klee always thought about the why and wherefore of his art. But at the Bauhaus he had to formulate a theory—consistent, communicable, and intelligible—concerning the use of pictorial elements for those who "wanted to get their bearings on the formal plane." After his regularly scheduled and carefully prepared lectures, Klee would assign problems to the students to work out on their own, and then, a week later, they would discuss the results.

Klee was often cross at being dragged into bitter controversies over principles of artistic education and the coordination of the various types of creative

activity. After one particularly heavy session, in December, 1921, he wrote to Gropius: "I welcome the fact that forces so diversely inspired are working together at our Bauhaus. I approve of the conflict between them if the effect is evident in the final product. To tackle an obstacle is a good test of strength, if it is a real obstacle. . . . On the whole, there is no such thing as a right or a wrong; the work lives and develops through the interplay of opposing forces, just as in nature good and bad work together productively in the long run."

Klee kept aloof from personal disputes and jealousies, although within the Bauhaus he became, as Gropius said, "the authority on all moral questions." The students and the teaching staff had great respect for his reserve, and he was even jokingly referred to as "the heavenly Father."*

Klee's activity at the Weimar Bauhaus was decidedly a fortunate stroke of destiny. The spirit of the school as a collectivity of individualists imposed useful obligations upon both masters and apprentices. Klee prepared very thoroughly for his classes. It is impossible to follow his ideas in *Pictorial Thinking* without being fascinated from the first word to the last by the simplicity and clarity of his formulations.

On January 24, 1924, Paul Klee, at the urging of Walter Dexel, gave a talk at an exhibit of his pictures in the Kunstverein in Jena. This lecture was first published in 1945 by Benteli Verlag, Bern. Here it is in its entirety:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My works should speak their own language, and if I am to take the floor in their presence, I cannot help wondering whether I have sufficient reasons for speaking out, and whether I will do so in the right way. As a painter I may feel fully in possession of my tools and able to set others to moving along the same path that I myself am impelled to follow. But I do not feel that it is in my power to point the way quite so surely by means of words alone.

I can offer myself some reassurance, however. What I say is not being presented to you all by itself. Think of it rather as a sort of supplement to the impressions my paintings have already conveyed; for perhaps those impressions have not in themselves been clear enough. If I can succeed to some extent in sharpening them, I will have reason to rejoice and think that my speaking to you makes some sense.

Rather than say what is only too commonplace, that the artist's real business is to create rather than to talk about his work, I should like to examine chiefly those parts of the creative process which take place more or less in the unconscious during

* Will Grohmann: *Paul Klee* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, n.d.), pp. 63-64.

the shaping of a work of art. To me, the only reason an artist may be allowed to talk about his work would seem to be this: to shift the center of gravity by examining the work in new terms; to somewhat lighten the deliberately overburdened formal side of the work by viewing it in a new manner and placing more emphasis upon the contentual side. This sort of compromise would appeal to me and might make a verbal and conceptual discussion more palatable to me.

But if I were to approach the problem in such a way, I would be thinking too much of myself and forgetting that most of you are far more at home with the content than with the form. And so I shall have to say a few words to you about the formal side of the matter also. I shall help you glance inside the painter's workshop and trust that we shall soon understand one another.

There has to be some common territory between laymen and artists in which mutual rapprochement is possible. If you can establish yourselves in that territory, the artist need no longer appear to you as something so altogether outré. Rather, he will seem to you a creature like yourselves, thrust unmasked into a complex world to which like yourselves he has to adjust as best he can. He differs from the rest of you only in his possession of specific equipment which enables him to withdraw somewhat from the affair; for that reason he may sometimes be happier than the uncreative person, the person who does not find salvation in the actual shaping of new things. You ought to be ready enough to grant the artist this relative advantage, since in other respects he has a hard enough time of it.

Let me employ a metaphor, the metaphor of the tree. The artist has undertaken to deal with this complex world, and he has, let us assume, adjusted to it to some degree, quietly, on his own. He is so well oriented that he can impose some order on the fleeting phenomena and experiences of the world. I should like to compare this orientation in the things of nature and life, this highly ramified order, with the root structure of the tree. From these roots the sap flows up to the artist, passing through him and through his eye. Thus he may be considered the trunk of the tree. Pressed and propelled by the power of the flowing sap, he transmits the content of his vision into his work. Just as the crown of the tree visibly spreads in all directions, in both time and space, so it is with the work. It would occur to no one to insist that the tree shape the crown exactly like the roots. Everyone will understand that there can be no exact mirror relationship between bottom and top. It is clear that the different functions in different elementary realms must exhibit significant deviations from one another.

It is pictorially necessary for the artist to deviate from prototypes. Yet now and then there is a movement afoot to forbid him to do precisely this. In their zeal some people have gone so far as to accuse the artist of impotence and deliberate falsification. Yet he has his assigned place in the trunk of the tree and does nothing but his task

of receiving and transmitting the orders that come from below. He neither serves nor dominates, but only communicates. Thus he truly assumes a modest position. He himself is not the beauty of the crown; that beauty only passes through him.

Before I proceed to clarify the areas which I have compared with the crown and roots of the tree, I must again mention a number of doubts. It is not easy to approach a whole that is composed of parts belonging to different realms. And both nature and its transformed image, art, are such wholes. It is difficult to grasp in one comprehensive sweep any such whole, whether it be nature or art, and it is even more difficult to help someone else to grasp it. This is due to the inadequacy of the only existing methods of dealing with a spatial structure, methods which depend on our dismembering that structure temporally. Language is a faulty instrument in this respect. For in language we lack the means to discuss synthetically a multidimensional simultaneity.

In spite of such inadequacy, we must examine the parts in detail. But as we linger over parts, no matter how thought-provoking each one is, we should remain conscious of the fact that we are dealing with parts. We must not let our nerve fail us if, in dealing with other parts, we find ourselves being led in an entirely different direction, into other dimensions, into remote fastnesses in which memory of previously discussed dimensions can fade away, or fail us altogether.

We should be able to say to each dimension as it flows away in time: Now you are becoming something that belongs to the past, but perhaps we shall find our way back to you once more in the new dimension which we are about to enter.

And if because there are more and more dimensions it becomes harder for us to summon to mind simultaneously the various parts of this structure, all we can do is to exercise a great, great deal of patience. The so-called spatial arts long ago accomplished the simultaneous presentation of polydimensional phenomena. The temporal art of music also did so, with sonorous economy, in polyphony. The drama too has achieved its greatest triumphs through such presentation of simultaneous levels of meaning. But unfortunately we have no examples of such simultaneity in the realm of didactics. The dimensional factor must be attended to from outside—afterward.

Nevertheless, perhaps I can succeed to some extent, so that members of my audience will find it easier to grasp this phenomenon of multidimensional contact in at least some works of art. As a modest intermediary, who does not identify himself with the crown, may I suggest that if you do grasp it, it will mean the dawning of a rich and radiant light.

Now let us get down to cases, to the dimensions of a picture.

I have spoken of the relationship of the crown to the root, of the work to nature, and have explained the difference in terms of the realms of earth and air, in terms of the differing functions of height and depth. In the work of art, which I have

compared to the crown, a rebirth of nature takes place; but nature is necessarily deformed because it must be forced into the specific dimensions of the picture. What are these specific dimensions? First of all, there are the somewhat limited formal factors such as line, light and shade, and color. The line is the most limited of all, being an element of measurement alone. Its movement is a matter of longer or shorter stretches, of obtuse or acute angles, of length of radii and distances of focal points: all questions of measurement. Measure is the characteristic of this element in the graphic work, and where the measurement is not strictly apparent, it means that we have treated the line in an absolutely pure manner.

An element of quite another sort is tonality, or as it is also called, *chiaroscuro*—those many shades between black and white. In this realm all is a question of specific gravity. One shade is denser or less dense in its white energy; another shade is more or less freighted with black. These gradations may be measured more or less accurately. The darker shades are referred to a white standard—on a white ground; the whites are referred to a black standard—on the blackboard—or both together are referred to a medium gray standard.

Thirdly, there are the colors, which obviously present another set of characteristics. For neither measurement nor weighing really tell us what we need to know about them. Where rule and scale can no longer determine any differences at all—for example, between a pure yellow and a pure red plane of equal size, shape and brightness, there still remains the essential difference which we describe by the words yellow and red. In the same way, we can compare salt and sugar in everything except their saltiness and sweetness. I prefer, therefore, to call the colors qualities. That is to say, we have formal categories of measurement, weight and quality, and in spite of fundamental differences these categories have certain relations among one another. Color is primarily quality; it is secondarily weight, for it has brightness as well as hue. Thirdly, it is also measure, for in addition to these other values it has limits, size, extent—these being its measurable characteristics.

Chiaroscuro is primarily weight; in its extension or delimitation it is also measure. But line is only measure.

Thus we have determined three elements, all of which intersect in the realm of purely cultivated color; two of them intersect in pure *chiaroscuro*, while in the realm of pure line only one of them is to be found.

According to the number of them present, the three elements comprise three realms that fit one into another like Japanese boxes. The biggest box contains all three elements, the middle one two, and the smallest only one. Perhaps this will help us understand Liebermann's aphorism that drawing is the art of omission.

The way the boxes fit into one another follows strict laws, and it is only logical

that we should obey these laws in dealing with the three formal elements. The possible combinations are in any case ample. Hence, we should blur the distinctions only if there is a special and sufficient inner motivation which would justify the use of colored lines, or of very pale lines. Similarly, we may need to justify other blurrings, such as the use of iridescent grays that gently run the gamut from yellow tones to blue tones.

Pure line can take the linear scale with its multiplicity of different lengths, as its ruling symbol.

The symbol of pure chiaroscuro is the scale of grays with its various gradations between white and black.

The nature of pure color is most characteristically expressed by the color wheel. This is the construction which makes the mutual relationships among the colors most graphic. Its clear center, the possibility that the circumference can be divided into six equal arcs, the division effected by the three diameters that may be drawn through these six points of intersection—these acts establish the particular locales for the interrelationships of colors. These relationships are first of all diametral; just as there are three diameters, so there are three diametral relationships: red-green, yellow-violet and blue-orange—in other words, the basic complementary colors.

Proceeding around the wheel a principal or primary color alternates with a mixed or secondary color. These mixed colors—three in number—fit in between their components: green between yellow and blue; violet between red and blue; and orange between yellow and red.

When the complementary pairs are mixed, they cancel out each other's colors and form gray. That this is true for all three is indicated by the gray center of the color wheel, which is the common intersection and halfway point of all three diameters.

Furthermore, through the apexes of the three principal colors, yellow, red and blue, a triangle can be drawn whose apexes are these primary colors themselves, but whose sides represent the mixture of the two primary colors at the apexes, so that in this triangle the red apex lies opposite the green side, the yellow apex opposite the violet side, and the blue apex opposite the orange side.

Accordingly, there exist the three basic colors and three basic subsidiary colors, or six adjacent major colors, or three times two related pairs of colors.

Let us proceed to the first constructions which may be made employing our three elements of form. Here is the crux of our conscious creative work; here we act as professionals; here the problem is the real problem of the artist. We are going to make a picture and in so doing we must try to set down something in such a way that it will travel into remoter dimensions beyond the periphery of consciousness.

At this stage in the creative process we must give some thought to technique,

or the lack of it. For if we lack orientation on the formal plane, we will find ourselves powerless to give our work its ultimately important content, no matter how exquisite our spiritual perceptions may be. As far as I can judge from my own experience, the creative artist must be free at any given moment to decide which of the many components are to emerge from their general place in the order of the elements, to be taken out of their neat pigeonholes and thrown together so that they may be exalted into a new order, used to build a structure which we call a picture. The choice of the formal elements and of the links among them is, within limits, analogous to the relationship between the musical idea and the motif and theme.

As such a structure gradually takes shape before our eye, an extraneous association is likely to appear. That is, we are tempted to interpret the structure as some kind of object. For any structure of complex articulation may, if we exercise a degree of imagination, be compared to the familiar structures of nature.

Once interpreted and given a name, the further qualities of the structure are no longer entirely subject to the artist's direct will, or at any rate no longer to the most intense concentration of his will. But it is in the matter of associations that the furious misunderstandings between the artist and the lay public have arisen. While the artist is totally concerned with grouping the formal elements in such pure and logical arrangements that each seems to be inevitable just where it is, and none in any way detracts from the other, some nonprofessional looking over his shoulder pronounces the devastating words: "But it isn't a likeness of Uncle at all!" The painter, if he has a good grip on his nerves, says to himself: "Uncle me no uncles! I must go on with my structure. . . . This new building block is a bit too heavy and drags the whole business too much to the left; I'll have to stick in a fairly heavy counterweight on the right, to restore the balance."

And so he proceeds, alternately adding on here and there until the scales bob up the way he wants them. And in doing so he is enormously happy if his construction has gotten off on a good foot and needs to be shaken up only to the extent that a few contradictory elements need to be added by way of contrast, to give it life.

But even without some outsider's heckling, sooner or later the artist himself may be hit by an association. In that case, there is nothing to stop him from accepting it, if it offers itself under some acceptable name. But once he has affirmed the presence of an object, he will want to add features here and there which belong to the concept. If the artist is lucky, these objective attributes may be inserted into those spots in the painting which still call for something more from the formal point of view. These added attributes will then look as though they had belonged there from the first. The controversy revolves less around the question of the object's existence

than around the object's appearance at any given time. I should hope that the nonprofessional who goes hunting through pictures for the object he holds especially dear will gradually become extinct—in my neighborhood, anyhow—and that henceforth I shall at worst encounter him as a ghost who can't help himself. For I know only too well my own passion for objects; and I confess that in some circumstances I am delighted when a familiar face bobs up, as if of its own accord, in a painting.

Why not? I have admitted that objects in paintings are justified, and that they give the picture an additional dimension. I have spoken of the formal elements, as they appear independently and as they combine with each other. I have attempted to explain how they emerge from their separate strata, how they unite into groups, and their at first cautious and then gradually bolder cooperation to form structures. I have said that these structures may be abstract, that they take on concreteness according to the associations that are brought to them, and may then acquire names such as star, vase, plant, animal, head or man.

Certain proportions of lines, the juxtaposition of certain tones of the scale of *chiaroscuro* and certain color harmonies each carry with them certain definite and specific types of expression. The expressiveness of lines, for example, may be due to the angles: sharply angular zigzag movements counterposed to a more horizontal line create certain expressional resonances. We can also produce contrasts by two lines, one of which shows tight coherence and the other a loose drifting.

In the realm of *chiaroscuro*, we achieve expressive effects by ranging through the whole scale of tones from black to white—which gives a feeling of force and full inhalation and exhalation—or else by keeping to the bright upper half of the tonal scale, or the deep and somber lower half, or of the gray middle sections—which gives a feeling of weakness flowing from the use of too much or too little light, or timorous hovering around the center. By means such as these, we can arrive at enormous contrasts in content. And what a range of possible variations in content can be achieved by the juxtapositions of color. Color as *chiaroscuro*, for example: red in red, running the whole range from too little to excess of red, the scale extended or extremely truncated. And the same can be done with yellow—which is something else again; the same in blue. What contrasts there are! Or color can be used antithetically, with passages from red to green, from yellow to violet, from blue to orange—whole worlds of meaning can be expressed this way.

Or again: we may have passages of color moving toward segments of the color wheel, missing the gray center but encountering one another in warmer or cooler grays. How many subtle nuances may thus be added to the contrasts previously mentioned.

Or again: we may have passages of color moving toward the circumference of the wheel, from yellow through orange to red, or from red through violet to blue,

or running the gamut of the entire circumference. What infinite stages there are, from the tiniest single note to the grandest polyphony of colors! What an enormous range all this gives to the artist!

Or, finally, we may even have passages through the whole spectrum of color, including the diametral gray and finally connecting with the scale of black to white. This is really pulling out all the stops.

But we might also consider where we want to put certain sifted tonalities. Every arrangement has its own potential range of combinations. And every configuration, every combination, will express something different; every form has its own face, its own physiognomy. Pictures look at us gaily or severely; they may be tense or easy, comforting or baneful, suffering or smiling. They are replete with spiritual and physiognomic nuances which run the whole range from tragedy to comedy.

But that is by no means all. There is also the question of the motion of the figures within the structure. If a picture achieves a tranquil, self-contained attitude, this means that the artist did not aim at verticality, but was interested only in stratifications along broad horizontals; or else, in a picture stressing upward movement, he consistently limited himself to verticals.

This matter of equilibrium can also be treated more loosely, without any sacrifice of stability. The whole look of the thing can be transferred to an intermediary realm like water or air, in which there are no longer any dominant verticals—as in the case with swimming or hovering. I call it an intermediary realm in contrast to the first, which is altogether terrestrial. In that case a new attitude appears, one that is highly dynamic, that lacks the fixity and stability of the earlier attitude. Such insistent dynamism introduces the dimension of style. At this point romanticism enters, in its most sentimental form. But at the heart of this attitude is the desire to hop away from the earth; the next step is to actually take flight. And the liberation is achieved; dynamic forces triumph over the law of gravitation. If the artist knows how to let go, then these forces that defy terrestrial bonds will carry him onward and upward, up to the celestial orbits. He will soar beyond the tempestuous, sentimental style to the kind of romanticism that merges with the universe.

Thus, the static and dynamic aspects of pictorial mechanics accord very neatly with the old polarity between classicism and romanticism.

Our picture has gradually passed through so many and such important transmutations that it would not be fair to go on calling it a construction. Henceforth we will consider it entitled to the resounding name of composition. And now I think we have said enough on this aspect of making a picture.

I should now like to consider the question of the object, and attempt to show why the artist so frequently arrives at an apparently arbitrary "deformation" of the natural form of an object. In the first place he does not attribute to this natural form

Brotherhood. Pencil drawing, 1939.



such crucial importance as do the realists who criticize him. For he does not regard these terminal forms as expressing the essence of nature's creative process. He is more concerned with the shaping forces than with the terminal forms. Perhaps we may say that he is an involuntary philosopher. And although he is not such an optimist as to affirm that this is the best of all possible worlds, neither does he say that this world surrounding us is so bad that he wants to have no part in copying its images. What he does say is the following:

The existing shape of the world is by no means the only possible shape! Therefore the artist directs a searching and penetrating look at the existing forms of nature. The more deeply he looks, the easier he finds it to extend his vision from the present to the past. Instead of the present shapes of nature, he more and more sees that the essential image of creation is genesis. He hazards the bold thought that the

process of creation can scarcely be over and done with as yet, and so he extends the universal creative process both backward and forward, thus conferring duration upon genesis. He goes still farther. First lingering in this world, he says to himself: This world looked different in the past, and in the future it will also look different. Then, sliding toward otherworldliness, he decides: On other planets it may well have assumed altogether different forms.

To wander about this way along the natural paths of creation is good training for the artist. It can stir him to the depths of his being; and once he has been set in motion he will seek freedom of development along his own creative paths. And when he has had the benefit of such freedom, we cannot blame him for deciding that the present state of the phenomenal world, as he happens to encounter it, is hamstrung, accidentally, temporally and spatially hamstrung, and much too limited in comparison to his deeper visions and far-ranging sensibilities.

And isn't it true that if we only take the relatively small step of glancing into a microscope, we will see images that we would all call fantastic and exaggerated if we happened to see them in a painting without realizing the joke? Mr. X, coming across a reproduction of a microphotograph in a cheap journal, would exclaim indignantly: Are those supposed to be natural forms? Why, the man just doesn't know how to draw!

Then does the artist have to deal with microscopy? History? Palaeontology? Only by way of comparison, only by way of gaining greater scope, not so that he has to be ready to prove his fidelity to nature! The main thing is freedom, a freedom which does not necessarily retrace the course of evolution, or project what forms nature will some day display, or which we may some day discover on other planets; rather, a freedom which insists on its right to be just as inventive as nature in her grandeur is inventive. The artist must proceed from the type to the prototype!

The artist who soon comes to a halt en route is one who has pretensions, but no more. The artists with real vocations nowadays are those who travel to within fair distance of that secret cavern where the primal law is hidden; where the central organ of all temporal and spatial movement—we may call it the brain or the heart of creation—makes everything happen. What artist would not wish to dwell there—in the bosom of nature, in the primordial source of creation, where the secret key to everything is kept? But not all are meant to reach it. Everyone must go where his own instinct leads him. Thus the impressionists who today are our polar opposites were in their own time absolutely right to stay with the hair-roots, the ground-cover of everyday phenomena. But our own instinct drives us downward, deep down to the primal source. Whatever emerges from this activity, call it what you will, dream, idea, fantasy, should be taken quite seriously if it combines with proper pictorial elements and is given form. Then curiosities become realities, realities of art, which

add something more to life than it usually seems to have. For then we no longer have things seen and reproduced with more or less display of temperament, but we have visionary experiences made visible.

"With proper pictorial elements," I have said. For that tells us whether the result is a painting or something else, and what kind of painting it is to be.

Our age has passed through many confusions and vicissitudes, or so it seems to us, for we may be so close that our judgment is faulty. But one general tendency seems to be gradually winning ground among artists, even among the youngest of them: pure cultivation of these pictorial elements and their pure application. The myth about the childishness of my drawing must have started with those linear structures in which I attempted to combine the idea of an object—a man, say—with pure representation of the linear elements. If I wanted to render a man "just as he is," I would need such a bewildering complex of lines that pure presentation of the elements would be impossible; instead, they would be blurred to the point of being unrecognizable. Moreover, I don't at all want to represent a man as he is, but only as he might be.

Only by such procedures can I succeed in combining philosophy with the pure practice of my art.

These principles hold true for the entire procedure. Blurring must be everywhere avoided, in dealing with colors too. This effort to avoid blurring lies behind what people sneer at as the "false" coloration in modern art.

As I have just suggested in my remark on "childishness," I also deal separately with the various elements of painting. That is, I am also a draftsman. I have tried pure drawing; I have tried pure chiaroscuro painting; and I have tried all sorts of experiments with color as these arose out of my meditations on the color wheel. Thus I have worked out the various types of colored chiaroscuro painting, complementary color painting, particolored painting and totally colored painting. And in each case I have combined these experiments with the more subconscious dimensions of painting.

Then I have tried all possible syntheses of the two types, combining and recombining, but always trying to keep hold of the pure elements as far as possible. Sometimes I dream of a work of vast expanse which would encompass the whole realm of elements, objects, contents and styles. Doubtless that will remain a dream, but it is good occasionally to imagine this possibility which at present remains a vague one.

Creation cannot be done with undue haste. A thing must grow, must mature, and if the time ever comes for that vast, all-embracing work, so much the better. We must go on seeking. We have found parts of it, but not yet the whole. Nor do we have the strength for it as yet, for we have no public supporting us. But we are

seeking a public; we have made a beginning at the Bauhaus. We have begun with a community to which we are giving everything we have to give. More than that we cannot do.

Klee was constantly extending the scope of his teaching. Although he had to start at the beginning again with each new class and introduce each group of students to his ideas, his teaching career remained a constantly joyful give and take. And he was always plowing the essentials of his pedagogic work and his life as a teacher back into his art. The greatness of Klee as a teacher, and the extent of his influence, emerges very clearly in the book *Das bildnerische Denken*, by Jürg Spiller (Benno Schwabe: Basel, 1956).

After my father's death my mother spent months working with Jürg Spiller, an art student from Basel, sifting through my father's papers and extracting all the material bearing upon pedagogy, of which there was a great deal. Arrangements were

Fall. Pen drawing, 1938.



made for the eventual publication of this material by the Benno Schwabe publishing firm. After my mother's death some of these papers were in Spiller's hands; the rest were taken over by the newly founded Klee Society. Six years were to pass before the carefully edited first volume appeared. The entire mass of papers on pedagogy was later, with my consent, turned over to the Paul Klee Foundation and is now in the archives of the Bern Museum of Art.

Klee had arranged the material for his courses in forty-eight folders. They comprise a total of 3,766 separate sheets and drawings which are not included in his catalogue of works.

In 1925, the Bauhaus publishing house of Albert Langen, Munich, brought out Paul Klee's *Pädagogisches Skizzenbuch*.

Klee's colleague, Lothar Schreyer, in his *Erinnerungen an Sturm und Bauhaus* (Albert Langen and Georg Müller: Munich, 1956), has set down a number of personal recollections of my father which I should like to quote.

The Wizard's Kitchen

I heard footsteps gently tapping above my head, back and forth. I could hear these steps above me only when it was very quiet in the Bauhaus—usually during the late afternoon hours. I would be sitting at the big drawing board in my Bauhaus studio, occupied with something impossible: the squaring of the circle. Spread out before me were diagrams used by Romanesque, Gothic and baroque builders' guilds. All hinted at the secret without stating it. Again I heard the footsteps above me. On the floor above was Paul Klee's studio. I thought of Klee's big tomcat Fritzi. He was really an unusually big tom, a cross between a domestic shorthair and a wildcat. Had he been even bigger, as big as a man, his rapid, soft tread would no doubt sound like that. But in spite of all preferential treatment, Fritzi was not allowed in the Bauhaus studio. It could only be Paul Klee himself pacing back and forth overhead. There was no restiveness in that movement, rather a note of tranquillity. Perhaps, though, there was a touch of a Berber lion captive behind bars in that pacing—rather more of a lioness than a lion, to be sure, and one that had accepted imprisonment and whose calm tread again and again measured the space allotted to it.

Now the footsteps above me ceased. I stood up, let everything lie on my drawing board, locked the door of my studio and ascended the stairs to the second story. Pausing in front of Paul Klee's door, I listened for a moment. Not a sound. I knocked, giving the signal we had agreed on for our visits. Paul Klee unlocked the door and let me in. He locked it again, put the key into

his coat pocket and pushed the piece of cardboard that hung from the latch over the keyhole. He did not like to have anyone peering through the keyhole.

And so I was back in the wizard's kitchen. Of course the whole of our Bauhaus in Weimar was a kind of laboratory. But this was the place where the real magic potions were brewed. The studio smelled strongly of a pleasant mixture of coffee, tobacco, canvas, oil paints, fine French varnishes, lacquer, alcohol and peculiar compounds. A small bluish cloud rose from the stubby pipe that looked suspended in front of Paul Klee's face. His large dark eyes peered at me through the smoke. Then he took the pipe from his mouth, and there was a faintly ironic crinkle in the corners of his lips. That amiable irony softened the sobriety of his eyes. "Come," Paul Klee said.

Leaning against the walls stood many small paintings, facing the walls. In the center of the studio three easels stood side by side, an unfinished picture on each of them. Paul Klee liked to be painting several pictures at the same time; he would go from one to the other, dabbing colors here and there on each. To one side, near the washbowl, boxes of paints, palettes, tubes, paint pots stood on a number of small tables, along with mixtures of size in shallow bowls, chalks, mysterious pastes, an alcohol lamp. There were brushes long and short, with thick and thin bristles or hairs, spatulas of all kinds, scorpers, etching needles, drawing pens, small knives, pincers, strips of linen, needlepoint canvas, handmade paper, Japanese paper, smooth cardboard, India inks, pieces of raw canvas and primed canvas, everything lying about in apparent confusion, but each item ready to hand in the order in which it would be needed for a picture. As he worked Paul Klee moved back and forth between the easels and the tables, choosing his materials, testing, peering, creating. That was the reason for the sound of footsteps that I so often heard above my studio.

"Made any progress, Schreyer?" he asked.

"No," I said. "Not a step forward."

"Neither have I. I find too many limits."

"I suspect there is only one limit."

We sat down and looked thoughtfully at one another.

"Perhaps you're right," Paul Klee said. "But I suspect that if you reach that one, art stops. And besides, perhaps it's immodest to keep one's eye fixed on the one limit."

"Probably you're right, Klee—about immodesty and the point where art stops."

"I made up my mind long ago to keep to modest aims. Look, here I have a small plane surface, the surface of a picture. Naturally I'd like to fill this

limited plane with all the meanings and powers at my command. But I cannot. Maybe it's altogether impossible. I measure off the limits, the limits of the quadrilateral. I go back and forth between the sides, crosswise and along the diagonals, in slanting, vertical and horizontal parallels. My movements produce a network from top to bottom, from right to left and vice versa. I encircle the surface with arcs, spirals, ovals, curves. More and more limits arise out of the movement of the lines and the movement of the planes. When I add the shadings of colors, I create more new limits on the plane, limits that optically raise or lower the plane. And as the process goes on I am constantly moving farther and farther away from the one limit whose existence you assume and which you are hunting for. I find a multiformity of innumerable limits. You, Schreyer, are seeking the single form that is ultimately limitless."

"Yes," I said. "The abolition of all limits. Doesn't the equilibrium of limits point to its existence? The equilibrium that you give your pictures, and that I am seeking in mine. And yet—is Nicholas of Cusa's *coincidentia oppositorum* the ultimate potentiality of art? Isn't it, if we consider it closely, renunciation of creativity; to put it mildly, the deliberate choking off of the creative impulse? Must art, if it is an annunciation of spiritual reality, necessarily leave us unsatisfied? Is what old Paracelsus said of his works true: Don't read my books; they are my excrement?"

Paul Klee gave that smile that hovered between wisdom and irony.

"That kind of statement sounds typical of you, Schreyer. But it only concerns what is called the work. We are concerned with the process of working. The resultant work no longer belongs to us. In fact we lose it to such an extent that it becomes an object of commerce, and ultimately an object for speculation. Heaven preserve us from ever becoming museum pieces!"

"Heaven preserve us! Tell me, do we really put equilibrium, tranquillity into our so-called successful works? Don't we rather put in agitation, and isn't the equilibrium of a pictorial composition really nothing but a shell, a vessel in which agitation boils? Aren't we like St. Augustine's boy who wanted to dip up the sea with a seashell—that is, aren't we trying the impossible? Doesn't it all remain a childish kind of creativity—child's play?"

"Certainly, certainly child's play! Their lordships the critics often say my pictures are like children's scribbles and smears. That's fine! The pictures my little Felix painted are better than mine, which all too often have trickled through the brain; unfortunately I can't prevent that completely because I tend to work them over too much. That criticism is true. But that's not the whole of it. The scribes and pharisees say that my pictures are the product of a diseased brain."

A mood of excited gaiety took possession of Klee. He took from a shelf Prinzhorn's recently published book of pictures by the insane, *Bildnerei der Geisteskranken*. It was at that time going the rounds in the Bauhaus.

"You know this excellent piece of work by Prinzhorn, don't you. Let's see for ourselves. This picture is a fine Klee. So is this, and this one too. Look at these religious paintings. There's a depth and power of expression that I never achieve in religious subjects. Really sublime art. Direct spiritual vision. Now can you say that I'm on the way to the madhouse? Aside from the fact that the whole world is an insane asylum."

I could not restrain my sarcasm.

"Probably the differences between us, children and the insane are only differences of degree. That goes for the art of so-called savages, too. I happen to have a few boxes from Sumatra, made out of bamboo and carved with various abstract designs, figures and lettering, or what seems like lettering. Every bit of the work is fine Paul Klee."

"There we have it again," Klee exclaimed. "You must show me those boxes. They're one more confirmation."

"Confirmation of what, Klee?" I asked. "May I say it? Do you ever, in your pictures whose content seems so wild and strange to people who are not child-like, not crazy, not primitive, which is to say, not fundamentally natural—do you ever abandon the limits of painting, violate the limits of pictorial composition?"

"No!" Paul Klee replied very earnestly. "I never violate the limits of the pictorial concept nor of pictorial composition. But I do shake things up by introducing new subjects—or rather, these subjects are not so much new as seldom seen. Of course even such content remains within the framework of nature. They are not naturalistic, but they remain within the realm of natural possibilities. In other words, my pictures are images of nature's potentialities."

"How do you escape the dangers of untrammelled fantasy?" I interjected.

"A good thing you pin me down on that point. Yes, fantasy is my, and your, greatest danger. That is the danger for all of us—the fatal byway for all so-called artists, the refuge for all who lack insight into spiritual reality and consciously or unconsciously try to fake such insight. All we can do is to commit ourselves, sincerely and faithfully, to the shift of consciousness that our generation has experienced or is experiencing. Just as I am doing, and as all of us here are doing. I say it often, but sometimes it isn't taken seriously enough, that in our time worlds have opened up which not everybody can see into, although they too are a part of nature. Perhaps it's really true that only children, madmen and savages see into them. I mean, for example, the realm of the unborn

and the dead, the realm of what can be, might be, but need not necessarily be. An in-between world. At least for me it's an in-between world. I call it that because I feel that it exists between the worlds our senses can perceive, and I absorb it inwardly to the extent that I can project it outwardly in symbolic correspondences. Children, madmen and savages can still, or again, look into it. And what they see and picture is for me the most precious kind of confirmation. For we all see the same things, though from different angles. On the whole and in details it is the same over this whole planet of ours—these things aren't fancies, but facts. Just how I continue to avoid the dangers of fantasy when I am seeking vision, insight, creative pictorial experience, I cannot say. It is a gift. But I do know that whenever I have succumbed to fantasy for the fun of it, or because it's so easy, I have felt pretty rotten about it."

"I know about the in-between world, too, Klee. But I've never had the gift of seeing it and representing it. Where that's concerned I have to draw the line."

"I have to draw the line too. I shall probably never get beyond the in-between world. Nor is it anything so wonderful as it seems, or anything sublime. Frequently it's just rather impish. It often seems to me that when I reach it, I'm not really treated with due solemnity in it, but instead with a good measure of irony. Which makes me think of what you once said to me, that the in-between world is much in need of redemption, in the meaning of your Christian mysticism. Do you know what Gertrud Grunow, that mother, aunt, friend and spiritual guide of all the wizards and witches of the Bauhaus, once said to me? My dear Klee, she said, you work too much with your abdomen."

He laughed heartily, and then added: "Of course she is right."

"Gertrud Grunow once favored me with an oracle, too," I said. "Dear Schreyer, she said, don't paint too soon. First learn to handle words properly. Of course she's right there too. You may laugh, Klee; I don't."

"Forgive me," he said. "The laugh is only embarrassment. At bottom I'm nothing but a sorcerer's apprentice whose master is running him a merry chase. I fiddle away at the in-between world. But there are also worlds that aren't in-betweens. A man like Kandinski looks far beyond the in-between world. I hope he'll be coming to Weimar soon. Kandinski looks into a world of pure light."

He fell silent.

"A good thing Kandinski is still alive and will come," I said. "Cruel that Franz Marc was taken from us so soon. If I'm not mistaken, he could see farther than all of the rest of us—as far as the reflections of the world of prototypes."

"Yes," Paul Klee said.

Paul Klee's entry in a Hamburg friend's guestbook.
New Year's Eve, 1931/32.

1
Kunst verhält sich zur Schöpfung
gleichnisartig. Das Band zur
optischen Realität ist sehr dehnbar.
Die Formwelt ist für sich souverän,
an sich jedoch noch nicht Kunst
im obersten Kreis. Im obersten Kreis
waltet über der Wirklichkeit ein
Geheimnis - und das Licht des Intellektes
erleuchtet kläglich

Lee

We both fell silent. He stood up.

"Come along with me. Would you like to hear some Mozart? I feel like playing now."

Georg Munche has also contributed some vivid impressions of Paul Klee. They are to be found in the following article published in the June 30, 1956, issue of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*:

Very early one morning in January, 1917, I went to the *Sturm* exhibition. There was a man in uniform sitting on the steps in front of the locked door.

He looked rather spindling and inconsequential, and wore the big army overcoat as if it were a potato sack. In his hand he held a cap trimmed with the black ribbon of the engineering corps. His beard was shaped to a sharp point, his eyes were dark and large. As I went by, he said: "I'd like to see Herr Walden. I am Paul Klee."

I had the key to the door. In the hallway hung the two water colors: *View of the Hard-Pressed City of Pinx* and *Constellations Above Wicked Houses*. Paul Klee explained that he was stationed at an airfield, as a draftee. Then he noticed his paintings. He fell silent. I was relieved when at last Herwarth Walden's light, rapid footsteps broke the embarrassing silence. We quickly agreed on how the wall space was to be allotted for the group show, and I bade good-by to the painter of an enchanted world. As I did so, I thought of his friends. Macke had been killed. Marc had also fallen. And now Paul Klee was a soldier too.

Walden had a way of bridging moments of emotion with terse remarks. He said: "Your colors are gay, as Macke's used to be." When, soon afterward, I also had to don the uniform, those words often came to my mind, and they came again when the brutal ugliness of shellholes and trenches was over and the beauty of the world could be seen anew.

In 1921, when Klee came to the Bauhaus in Weimar, he moved into a studio next door to mine. One day I heard a curious rhythmic trampling. When I met Klee in the hallway I asked him: "Did you hear that odd sound a while ago?" He laughed and said: "Oh—did you notice it? You weren't meant to. I was painting away and suddenly—I don't know why—I had to dance. A pity you heard it! Ordinarily I never dance."

Paul Klee was sparing of words. He did not do much talking even during the meetings of the Masters' Council. Frequently a "yes" or "no" was all he wished to say. Later, in his studio or at home, he would sit down and write out a statement, often out of a feeling of discomfort over having taken no position, said nothing when he had had the chance. His ideas were shrewd and prudent, but they came to him later, or else he reserved his words for his teaching, which he prepared conscientiously, so much so that he often wrote out his lectures. When he appeared in the classroom of the Bauhaus to give his first lesson, he backed through the door into the room. Turning around without looking at his audience, he went straight up to the blackboard and began lecturing and drawing. He illustrated what he was saying, and in conclusion drew two arcs with chalk. The arcs intersected at one end and just touched at the other. Behold, there was a fish on the blackboard! The first arc began

at the upper tip of the tail fin and formed the line of the belly, then turned up and ended where the mouth would be. The second arc started at the lower tip of the tail fin, curved up to form the line of the back, and met the first arc in the fish's mouth. "And this is the fish of Columbus!" Paul Klee said. He closed his notebook and left the room.

I heard Paul Klee talk about the magic of painting only once. That was the time in his studio in Dessau when I moved aside a framed water color and noticed that he had written on the back: "Reserved for posthumous collection." On the front, painted in subtle tracings and spacings, was the encounter of two beings, one of which was floating through space toward the other. We started talking about this picture and Klee spoke about imagination, reality and dream. The inscription on the back, those instructions for a time after his death, and the conscientiousness with which he made arrangements for the future of his works, aroused utter amazement in me at the time.

Some thirty years have passed since, and only one sentence of that conversation has remained in my memory. I had asked Klee whether a painter's pictorial world could possibly correspond with verisimilitude to a supersensuous reality. He had replied: "The real truth invisibly underlies all."

The lively period of the Weimar Bauhaus came to a sudden end in the summer of 1925 when Leutheusser, then President of the State of Thuringia, gave orders for the school to be closed. Dessau was the only city willing to take over the Bauhaus bag and baggage. As we have already seen, Klee taught for five more years at the new Bauhaus. The following extracts from eight of his letters show the diminishing enthusiasm he felt for the school by the end of that period. On April 12, 1930, he wrote to Lily:

I have had my time taken up in the most unpleasant way these past few days with meetings and discussions of details. That all seems to be about over now. But one can never be sure here. . . .

On May 2, 1930:

Today I had a class again, was not exactly brilliantly prepared; I simply wouldn't have been able to summon up the energy for thorough preparation; but I'm well rested anyhow and therefore not at all nervous. For that reason it went off fairly well.

On Monday the next semester starts, with the rebels up in arms against the art instruction. I don't expect the general temper to be very good.

On May 8, 1930:

Today there's a modern film in the Bauhaus (abstract) and I intend to see it.

On July 6, 1930:

Due to the alacrity of the newspapers, I had two hectic days, and had to tell Kandinski and Hannes Meyer that the arrangement with Düsseldorf is virtually settled. It might have been foreseen that an official visit from the mayor and Dr. Grote would follow, likewise that they would be lavish with promises. Naturally I am standing firm, because I don't sway with every wind and I expect that Düsseldorf will do everything possible to facilitate our moving there.

On September 9, 1930:

Today I heard from several informants. The students are taking their old stand; the opposition seems to have flared up anew. Today I am going to a meeting to find out further details, and also to inform the director of my own intentions. It is quite possible that he isn't altogether sure of my situation. . . .

On September 13, 1930:

Things at the Bauhaus turned out as I expected, which isn't altogether inconvenient for me. The excitement among the students grew worse and worse, so that the knot had to be severed. We have therefore cut the semester short. The masters are using the time and tranquillity thus gained to reorganize. New bylaws have been adopted, and those of the students who accept these new bylaws will register anew on October 21. The mayor was present at the meeting where this was decided, and naturally justified himself with his characteristic agility, so that the council of masters subsequently had to make the best of the existing facts.

Mies himself is something of a tiger and showed no inclination to engage in shilly-shallying. I hope he will always keep his nerve, and not burn himself on this machinery which is running dangerously hot.

At least I myself no longer have any contracts to abide by. One or another among the students who have been unjustly expelled will no doubt want to show me his work occasionally. As a private person I cannot very well say no, and yet I am only pro forma a private person now; otherwise I am still a Bauhaus master.

On September 14, 1930:

First of all such a resolution can be passed only by the council of the masters, and I am still a member of it. Then, the work never stops; on the contrary, this is when the building of the new Bauhaus must begin. Of course I shall spare myself as much of that work as possible, but I must be available in case my advice is needed.

Aside from all that I keep at my principal task: painting. That goes well here, where I have all my gear at hand. As a matter of fact it really is going well, and I am making a beginning on which I can later build. The change-over went very fast this time.

And on September 18, 1930:

Furthermore I may report that the official step is at last taken: canceling of the contract as of April 1, 1931. Furthermore, the new head has excused me from attending meetings, and I have asked that my teaching be restricted to the painting workshop. This will mean an interim of relaxation and a foretaste of academic life. It means too that I can also do things like certain kinds of tinkering that it's harmful to my psyche to repress completely.

As has been mentioned, in 1930 Paul Klee accepted an appointment to a professorship at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art. The parting with the Bauhaus was made somewhat easier for him by his weariness with the monotonous repetition of his teaching chores, and by the institution's sharp swing to the political left that took place under the direction of Hannes Meyer. (The Bauhaus was depoliticalized in the fall of 1930 when Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was elected director.) The individual kind of teaching at the Düsseldorf Academy was far more to Klee's taste. One of his students there, Petra Petitpierre, took Klee's instruction down in shorthand, and in 1957 published her notes in a book entitled *Aus der Malklasse von Paul Klee* (Bern: Benteli Verlag). I should like to conclude this section on Paul Klee as a teacher by quoting the two finest chapters of this highly illuminating little book:

Studies:

Our course will be divided into the following categories:

- 1. Problems.*
- 2. Nature studies.*
- 3. Composition.*
- 4. Free-choice works.*

I will assign the problems to supplement the work that you yourselves bring in.

Thus, we will do drawings based on the cube, the sphere, the pyramid, the cone. We will treat them in the following ways:

Naturalistic representation.

Transparency.

Compositional juxtaposition.

Variation on the surface.

Studies from nature would include: nudes, flowers, vegetables, organic matter. Nature studies are stimulating and can teach us a great deal; I should not like to omit them. We can also make things easy for ourselves, and paint and draw only what we like. Some like to paint landscape, others still life, fruit or sausages.

Once I worked within doors for weeks on end, until I suddenly discovered on a walk in the vicinity of Bern that nature is really incredibly beautiful. I then tried to set this down on canvas. Even today I still make studies in the open air, without drawing directly; for the eye draws anyhow, and there are landscapes that have tremendous influence upon us. In no field of painting can we get anywhere without nature studies.

Composition will be studied in connection with your free-choice work.

The Prototype

If we tried hard enough, we would be able to point out traces of the primal form in certain pictures. But often a picture will be at a tremendous remove from any prototype. By way of compensation, however, this remoteness from the prototype often helps us achieve greater unity, because our work is in no way bound to fixed concepts.

We often see forms that are simple to interpret: leaflike, blossomlike, animallike, human, architectural, artificial or technical, earthy, airy, solid. These lend themselves to a prototypal treatment, that is to say, a reconstruction in close harmony with the prototype.

Further Development

How far the artist has moved from the prototypal is revealed by the manner in which he juxtaposes his forms and the degree to which he himself dictates those forms; thus something enters the picture which, if it is lacking in artistry, might be considered sheer contrivance.

Every picture contains not only the prototypal, but the ego of the artist, which infiltrates the entire artistic act from the beginning. The active ego puts itself into relationship with the prototype, possibly under stimuli received from elsewhere. If

the prototype and ego stand in valid conflict to each other, that too is an active attitude. In such a situation, it is often better if the artist holds fast to the last thread which ties his subject to the prototypal.

One might be able to feel the thread to the prototypal even in the most abstract pictures. For the most part, one needs a particular kind of experience to do so. But sometimes the prototype of the abstract reveals itself at first glance. One may, for example, see the bond between the picture and certain phenomena of the plant world. St. Francis called all things brothers—and so there are these kinships at the roots of things. The same is also true of landscape images. It is a question of basic images. Included are such things as water, land, air, clouds, stone, trees, animals, man, machines.

Appendix I: Styles and Categories

It is no simple matter to survey Klee's opus of some 9,000 paintings, drawings, etchings, etc., and to divide it into particular stylistic periods. For the styles continually overlap. However, certain fundamental classifications can be detected, though I fear there may be a number of gaps in my arrangement:

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Childhood drawings. | 1883-92 |
| 2. Nature, portraiture, humor. | 1892-1900 |
| 3. Satirical and philosophical works,
color experiments. | 1900-13 |
| 4. Abstract and cubist works. Stronger use of color after Kairouan. | 1913-19 |
| 5. Breakthrough of color and form; expression. | 1919-21 |
| 6. First Bauhaus period, Weimar. Imaginative
flights, perspective, layering; influence of
teaching upon the work. | 1921-25 |
| 7. Travel impressions. North Sea, Sicily. | 1923, 1924 |
| 8. Second Bauhaus period at Dessau. Further
development of color in larger forms.
Constructivist influence. | 1925-30 |
| 9. Divisionist-pointillist period. | 1927-32 |
| 10. Travel impressions. Egypt, France, Spain. | 1929, 1932, 1933 |
| 11. Düsseldorf period. | 1930-33 |
| 12. First Bern period, introspection,
works small in size at start. | 1934-36 |
| 13. Second Bern period. Revival after
illness; black signs, pastels, the eye.
Enormous productiveness: 753 works in
two years. | 1937-38 |
| 14. Third Bern period; extraordinary
creative surge; large formats; premonitions
of death; 1,654 works in sixteen months. | 1939-40 |

The large exhibition of the Paul Klee Foundation, which was held from October 27 to November 21, 1948, in the Kunsthalle at Basel, was hung by Dr. Georg Schmidt, who also wrote the catalogue. He set up the following thematic division of Klee's works:

1. Early paintings.	1898-1908
2. Satiric etchings.	1903-5
3. Objective line drawings.	1909-10
4. Abstract and dreamlike line drawings.	1912-19
5. Interpenetrating planes and colors.	1913-14
6. Interpenetrating planes and colors with objective elements.	1916-22
7. Rhythms of rectangular colored planes.	1923-30
8. Rhythm of parallel bands.	1929-30
9. Theater and circus.	1922-29
10. Vegetation.	1920-25
11. Theater, birds.	1924-29
12. Rhythmic repetition of similar elements.	1924-36
13. Bodies in spaces.	1921-29
14. Interpenetration of geometrically defined planes.	1922-36
15. Interpenetration of organically defined planes.	1924-40
16. Interlacing of geometrical lines.	1919-31
17. Ships.	1917-28
18. Interlacing of organic lines.	1906-35
19. Interweaving of parallel lines.	1925-34
20. Things that stand, walk and run	1929-40
21. Interlacing of bodies.	1930-39
22. Resolution and liberation.	1937-38
23. Struggle between bondage and release.	1939
24. Final bondage, final release.	1940
25. Figures and heads.	1921-38
26. Landscapes.	1923-38

As we look over Klee's creative work, we are struck by the large number of "categories" which he cultivated. I have selected a few of these groups, along with the titles of pictures that fall into these categories, and relevant dates.

1. THE ARTIST: a form of self-portrait
 - 1919: Artist Thinking
 - Artist Feeling
 - Artist Considering
 - Artist Forming

2. THE POLICEMEN: gay variants
1919: The Famous Policemen
The Fleeing Policemen
Temptation of a Policeman

3. PRECISION: portrait studies
1927: Semitic Beauty—Precision
Negro Beauty—Precision
Chinese Beauty—Precision
Ugliness—Precision

4. EIDOLA=OF YORE

Will Grohmann comments in his biography of Klee (p. 249): "The works Klee produced during the last month before his death include two series of drawings—the *Eidola* and the *Passion in Detail*. 'Eidos' means idea, archetype, and in these pictures Klee has captured the essentials of specific human types."

- 1933: Hope of Yore
Melancholic of Yore
As Joseph of Yore
1938: Charming of Yore
1940: Enthusiastic of Yore
Eidola: Musician of Yore
Eidola: Actress of Yore
Eidola: Sickler of Yore
Eidola: Maenad of Yore
Eidola: General of Yore
Eidola: Woman Drinker of Yore
Eidola: Woman Eater of Yore
Eidola: Brutal Man of Yore
Eidola: Comic Singer of Yore
Eidola: Cannibal of Yore
Eidola: What of Yore? Just Phantoms Left
Eidola: Who I Was of Yore?
Eidola: From the Service of the Temple of Yore
Eidola: Samaritan Woman of Yore
Eidola: Triune of Yore
Eidola: Satiated Forever of Yore?

Eidola: Pair of Folk Dancers of Yore
Eidola: Iphigenia II of Yore
Eidola: Navy of Yore
Eidola: Harper of Yore
Eidola: Philosopher of Yore
Eidola: Knaueros, Kettledrummer of Yore
Eidola: Stage Fright of Yore
Eidola: Pianist of Yore
Eidola: Seamstress of Yore
Eidola: Whence of Yore? Where? Whither?
Beautiful as Aphrodite of Yore

5. PASSION IN DETAIL: works on the sufferings of humanity

1940: Want to Be in on It
Also a Galley Slave
One from the Fifth Row
Hard Parting
Dürer's Mother Too
Elderly Spinster
Centrally Affected
A Shaper

6. URCHS: a fabulous beast

1940: Red Urchs
Orchs, a Relative
Urchs, Indecisive
Urchs, Listening
Old Urchs
Urchs, Tramping Downhill
Urchs, at the Water
Urchs, Irritable
Urchs and Young
Urchs, Having Overeaten
Urchs of the Heroic Age
Urchs, Half Rear View
Tortoise-shelled Urchs
Fleeing Urchs
Urchs Mating

7. APPROXIMATION

1930: Psychogram of Approximation

1935: Approximation—Approaching

1938: Approximation of Four

1939: Presumptive and Defective Approximation

The Cloud

A Slightly Baroque Basket Striving Toward Definition

Approximation to Lucifer Object

Approximation CONTESTED

Approximation BOTH

Approximation DUBBLE

Approximation CROPPED

Approximation TRASH

Approximation INSAULT

Approximation OVERTURN

Approximation DA PORT

Approximation PRIDE

Approximation HANDY

Approximation STEP-

Approximation BROOD

Approximation NFIGURATION

Approximation SAMBANSEL (Ensemble)

Approximation PUCKER

Approximation MASCUL

Approximation KNOSE

Approximation GENIPHIA

Approximation ALMOST DECIDED

Approximation BIMA

Approximation AP

Portrait Approximation MITA

Approximation SABED

Approximation DODI

1940: Approximation LANDS

8. THE INFERNAL PARK

1939: Amazon

Introductory

First Plane

At the Sign of Premature Repose

At the Sign of Luxury
At the Sign of Apparent Spanning
The Region for Repentance
The Blossom for Narcosis
At the Sign of Maternal Anxiety
Vase N
At the Sign of Dichotomy
To the Winds
At the Sign of Fruitless Conversion
The Site of Murder
At the Sign of Haste without Rest
The Ship of Dubious Salvation
Scene Toward End

9. ANGELS

Discussing this category, Grohmann writes in his biography of Paul Klee:

Are these the angels to which Rilke referred in his *Duino Elegies*—superior beings, who in their majesty are fatal to man? According to Rilke, they reach out beyond life and death and are at home neither in this world nor in the next but in the supreme union of the two. They have already consummated the transmutation of the visible into the invisible and recognize in the invisible a higher reality. . . . Klee's angels, too, live in the supreme unity that embraces life and death and see in the invisible a higher reality; but for him that was equally true of mankind, at least toward the end. This world and the next interpenetrate, and man partakes of both. Klee dwelt "somewhat closer than usual to the heart of Creation." Did the angels dwell closer to it still? Certainly not as the "spoilt children of Creation," else how could Klee have invented an "unfinished," a "poor," an "ugly," or a "forgetful" angel? . . . Klee's angels are not opposite to men, they are transitions and symbols of the last mutation, creatures neither "terrible" nor "deadly in their majesty."*

1913: An Angel Handing Over the Object of Desire
1918: Angelus Descendens
1919: Fire Angel
1920: Angelus Novus
1921: An Angel as Candlestick

* Will Grohmann, *Paul Klee* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.), pp. 350, 357.

1930: Angel Drinking
 Fragment No. 67—Angel
 1931: Engelshut [place name: "Angel's Care"]
 In Engelshut
 In Engelshut on a Steep Path
 In Engelshut on a Wide Track
 In Engelshut Broad
 Pair of Angels
 1934: Angel Becoming
 1938: Archangel
 Debut of an Angel
 1939: Kneeling Angel
 The Angel and the Presentation
 Angelic
 Unangel
 Unfinished Angel
 In the Anteroom of Angelhood
 The Rock of the Angels
 Poor Angel
 Candidate Angel
 Alert Angel
 Angel of the Old Testament
 Forgetful Angel
 Angel in Boat
 Angel Full of Hope—Physiognomic
 Angel Overfilled
 Angel from the Cross
 Listening Angel
 Angelus Dubiosus
 More Bird Than Angel
 Angel in the Kindergarten
 Bell Angel
 Angel Still Female
 Crisis of an Angel
 Another Angel of the Cross
 Angelus Militans
 Angel from the Star
 Ugly Angel

Angels Three
Angel, Still Groping
1940: Angel Still Ugly
Angel as Yet Untrained in Walking
Doubting Angel
The Angel of Death

Appendix II: The Catalogue of Works

Rarely has any artist kept a catalogue so carefully and completely as Paul Klee. He divided his works into panels (oil paintings), colored sheets (water colors, gouaches, tempera, pastels), monochrome sheets (drawings), graphic work (etchings, lithography, woodcuts) and sculpture. Up to 1924, he numbered the works of the current year from number 1 on. From 1925 to 1940, he employed letters of the alphabet in the tens columns. This was done at the request of the art dealers, who did not want buyers to know how many works Klee produced in a year. In my lists I have headed the various columns Panels, Colored Sheets, Drawings, Etchings, Lithographs, Woodcuts and Sculptures. I have included the brief period of glass paintings under Colored Sheets. In his later days Klee also recorded the materials and technique used for each work, and in the case of panels, the measurements.

From about 1907 on, Klee entered all the works he considered in any way significant in his catalogue. As a young man he had been equally fanatical about order, and had assigned a number to each work, without including the year in which it was done. Later, however, he became so dissatisfied with his early works that he omitted all the many studies from the catalogue. His parents in Bern, however, collected everything the young painter had rejected. Today these works of his youth possess historical if not artistic value. The greater part of them are in the Paul Klee Foundation and in my personal collection, with a few having found their way into the art market.

The first volume of the catalogue was actually kept in duplicate. During the First World War Klee was afraid that his records might be lost and in 1916 asked Sasha Morgenthaler to copy them.

After my arrangement with the Paul Klee Foundation in 1953, the catalogue was turned over to the Foundation; it is now kept in the safe of the Bern Museum of Art.

Here, then, is the list of all the works Paul Klee included in his catalogue:

Year	Panels							Total
	(Oil Paintings)	Colored Sheets	Drawings	Etchings	Lithographs	Woodcuts	Sculptures	
1883	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	5
1884	—	4	2	—	—	—	—	6
1885	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	5
1886	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Year	Panels		Draw-ings	Etch-ings	Litho-graphs	Wood-cuts	Sculp-tures	Total
	(Oil Paintings)	Colored Sheets						
1887	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1888	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
1889	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1890	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
1891	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1892	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1893	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1894	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1895	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1896	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1897	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1898	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1899	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
1900	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1901	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
1902	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	3
1903	—	—	1	4	—	—	—	5
1904	—	—	10	7	—	—	—	17
1905	—	16	20	3	—	—	—	39
1906	—	12	20	1	—	—	—	33
1907	—	10	19	1	—	—	—	30
1908	—	26	48	—	—	—	—	74
1909	1	13	57	—	—	—	—	71
1910	2	22	89	11	—	—	—	124
1911	—	9	100	3	—	—	—	112
1912	1	31	129	1	8	3	—	173
1913	6	54	139	6	—	—	—	205
1914	7	109	92	3	—	—	—	211
1915	10	122	115	1	1	—	6	255
1916	2	40	30	3	1	—	5	81
1917	—	101	61	—	—	—	—	162
1918	—	156	55	—	—	—	—	211
1919	48	123	85	—	7	—	2	265
1920	62	74	95	—	3	—	—	234
1921	21	117	84	—	3	—	—	225
1922	37	99	120	—	4	—	—	260
1923	34	141	81	—	8	—	—	264
1924	28	165	105	—	—	—	1	299

Year	Panels (Oil Paintings)	Colored Sheets	Draw- ings	Etch- ings	Litho- graphs	Wood- cuts	Sculp- tures	Total
1925	36	110	107	—	3	—	—	256
1926	34	61	155	—	—	—	—	250
1927	48	62	210	—	—	—	—	320
1928	29	62	117	4	—	—	1	213
1929	26	139	181	1	—	—	—	347
1930	28	149	103	1	—	—	—	281
1931	21	89	175	2	—	—	—	287
1932	52	99	191	1	—	—	1	344
1933	27	119	336	—	—	—	—	482
1934	22	97	100	—	—	—	—	219
1935	12	89	47	—	—	—	—	148
1936	5	15	5	—	—	—	—	25
1937	38	119	107	—	—	—	—	264
1938	44	182	263	—	—	—	—	489
1939	43	248	962	—	—	—	—	1253
1940	9	106	251	—	—	—	—	366
Total	733	3197	4877	54	38	3	16	8918

	Works (preceding table)	Post- humous Works	Total
Panels (Oil Paintings)	733	28	761
Colored Sheets	3197	66	3263
Drawings	4877	89	4966
Etchings	54	8	62
Lithographs	38	1	39
Woodcuts	3	—	3
Sculptures	16	36	52
Total	8918	228	9146

Appendix III: Location of the Works

Private Collections

Here is the point at which to pay tribute to those private collectors who bought my father's works when his name was relatively unknown. Hanna Bürgi-Bigler and Herman Rupf of Bern began collecting Paul Klee's works before the First World War. Their collections continued to increase, and anyone who studies them will be convinced that these two pioneers chose with taste from the start. Dr. Doetsch-Benziger of Basel had a penchant for the more lyrical side of Klee's work. The Ibach-Stangl collection in Munich is built along somewhat similar lines. Dr. Friedrich of Zurich and Dr. Huber of Glarus likewise chose with great discrimination. Among the German collectors I should like to mention Ida Bienert, who now lives in Munich, and Otto Ralfs of Braunschweig, who lost the greater part of his impressive Klee collection as a result of the war. A number of collections of various sizes, a good many of them of recent date, are to be found in other countries of Europe and particularly in the United States, where private collectors and museums possess, I have heard, more than a thousand works by Klee.

One of the pathfinders of modern art was Herwarth Walden. Before the First World War he founded the association of artists known as *Der Sturm*. In Munich there were the Thannhauser and Goltz art galleries which pioneered in showing the work of abstractionists. Due to the efforts of these courageous intermediaries and to the first books on Klee—I am thinking primarily of Hausenstein's, which are still of considerable value—Klee's work attracted more and more attention.

Museums

The first museums to collect modern art were the Kronprinzenpalais in Berlin and the Folkwang Museum in Essen. Thanks to the Nazis' hostility to this branch of art, other European countries and the United States acquired a considerable lead in the collection of modern works. The museums of Basel, Bern and Zurich own a number of Klee's finest works, and the Paul Klee Foundation, which probably has the most important Klee collection in the world, has its home in Bern. Museums and private collectors in the United States have been very assiduous in collecting the posthumous works since 1945; but the majority of these works have nevertheless remained in Europe. Innumerable publications and shows have contributed to the further dissemination of Klee's works.

Posthumous Collection

In order to keep a collection for himself, and not be stripped bare by art dealers and collectors, Klee set aside a number of his works as a Posthumous Collection.

After his death, however, these works unfortunately were not turned over in a body to the Paul Klee Foundation. Some even found their way into the art market. Klee was very reluctant to sell his drawings to collectors, and in most cases refused to sell them at all. He wanted to preserve them in their totality in a posthumous collection—a wish that was, alas, not to be granted. Of his approximately five thousand drawings, almost two thousand have entered the art market and ended up in private collections. Our wedding present—*The Jumper*—a wonderful panel painting of 1930, as well as five water colors done in 1934, stayed safely with us through war and peace. But on the other hand the collages—about six of them—which my father made for me when I was a child, and my collection of family photographs, were destroyed in an air raid. Ever since I have been back in Bern I have again been collecting all photographs connected with the life of Paul Klee. In 1953, I regained possession of the family letters, and after the death of my Aunt Mathilde in September of that year I added her files to mine. She had a large number of memorabilia of Klee's youth: school notebooks, report cards, and textbooks with his delightful sketches in them.

At the memorable Klee show in St. Gall from January 22 to April, 1955, 413 works from my collection were shown to the public for the first time. My collection has since supplemented many other Klee shows (at São Paulo, Munich, Bern, Montreux, Grenoble, Berlin, Hamburg).

By swapping his paintings for theirs, my father acquired a fine though not too large collection of works by his contemporaries, Kandinski, Marc, Feininger, Yavlenski, Verevkin and others. These works, too, are included in the Posthumous Collection.

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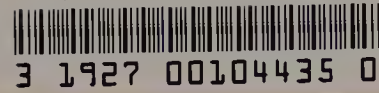
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