



PAUL KLEE

(1879-1940)

Eyes on Art - Fall 2016

Paul Klee Biography

Paul Klee was born on December 18, 1879 near Berne Switzerland. He lived with his mother, a Swiss singer, his father, a German music teacher and his older sister Matilde. His parents wanted him to be a musician and when he was 7 years old, they taught him to play the violin. He was so good at it that when he was 10 years old, he played in an adult orchestra! As much as Paul loved music, he also loved art. When he was 4 years old, his grandmother gave him a box of chalk and encouraged him to draw. When he was 9, he visited his Uncle's restaurant and saw patterns in the marble tabletops and would copy them to create pictures!

When Paul was a teenager, he decided to become an artist but played the violin almost every day of his life. Paul had a great sense of humor and he expressed it in his paintings. He started out learning all he could about drawing with lines. He said that drawing was nothing more than taking a line for a walk! When Paul was 17, he did a drawing of his bedroom which shows what a great draftsman he was. When he started to paint, he only painted in black and white and never thought he would become a great painter of color. But, after Paul Klee travelled to Tunisia in North Africa and saw brilliant colors, he was compelled to paint what he saw and became an expert at color! He also experimented with different art materials and surfaces.

Paul thought that children were the best artists! In fact he thought that his son Felix created artwork better than he did! Paul Klee was a "stay at home dad" who took care of Felix, cooked and painted while his wife Lily gave piano lessons to support the family.

Paul realized that painting did not have to look like a photograph to be good. He thought that paintings should be **Abstract** - showing images which depart from reality. In his art, Paul Klee shows us his feelings and his imagination. These are things that are inside all of us and are invisible - we cannot see them with our eyes! His paintings are like x-rays of his thoughts!

Some of Klee's paintings convey a musical feeling. The patterns of color and shapes in his paintings make people imagine the rhythm of music. Paul was also a poet, a writer and an art teacher who loved nature. Coincidentally, Klee means clover in German and Paul would sometimes sign his paintings with a clover!

Throughout his life, Paul loved cats and he did paintings and took photographs of them. His favorite cat liked to sit on his shoulders and would follow him around as he worked on his paintings. When Klee was 29, he was asked what he would like to be if not himself. He answered, "a cat in my house"!

From 1898 to 1933, Paul studied, taught and created art in Germany. In 1933, the Nazis came into power. They wanted paintings to look realistic and banned the sale of modern art, including Klee's. Klee refused to be loyal to the Nazis and was fired from his teaching position. The Nazis then removed his art from public museums. Life became so difficult that Klee went back to Switzerland with his wife Lily.

Although Paul Klee had many struggles in his life, he did become a famous and successful artist during his lifetime. His art was appreciated and exhibited all over the world. He died in 1940 at the age of 60 after contracting a rare disease.

Paul Klee Word Search

I M G E R M A N Y T T J E L P M E T G S
 E R W D W Y N B E P S L Q H J Q C Y X F
 K D K R W A S O S T C P Q B Q Y V C B P
 Y G D O C L P V B P Q X Z T V T I T M C
 S Q T L O S U X I L Q T F T Z G K P C O
 D M T O L F T A I R Q H T G A M C F N D
 E H Z C L E U X P M E O F M K C V L I D
 F L W G A U E X T L A U O R J F N Y X U
 I Y B C G R U Q B B K G U A R M L E M L
 K J H I E D T I Y P L H I X D E P J U T
 F E V B S E S S V C E T U N D N U N S V
 R E K J K I O Q B F E S W V A T R R I R
 X Y H Q V H V V H A M I Y I M T J M C M
 U M N S G G E N E F O W K O X X I R I X
 V O I C I L S W I T Z E R L A N D O A I
 Z H M L U F Y G I N A K P I J D V S N Q
 M H D R A W I N G K R C L N V P X C B P
 F X I M Z S M K Z E T H Z S S N K I Y U
 V M S N E D R A G B D G M S Q S R F M X
 M R L Q V Q S B V D R E A M S D M N Z N

PAUL
 SWITZERLAND
 COLOR
 FISH
 GARDENS
 COLLAGE
 THOUGHTS
 POET

KLEE
 GERMANY
 CAT
 MAGIC
 INVISIBLE
 IMAGINATION
 MOZART
 TEACHER

ABSTRACT
 DRAWING
 BIRD
 TEMPLE
 VISIBLE
 DREAMS
 VIOLIN
 MUSICIAN

Current Art Exhibitions in the New York Area

[Metropolitan Museum of Art, Breuer \(Madison Ave. and 75th St.\):](#)

Humor and Fantasy—The Berggruen Paul Klee Collection- through December 31, 2016

diane arbus: in the beginning - through November 27, 2016

[Metropolitan Museum of Art:](#)

Fragonard, Drawing Triumphant - through January 8, 2017

Jerusalem 1000-1400, Every People under Heaven - through January 8, 2017

Valentin de Boulogne, beyond Caravaggio- through January 16, 2017

Poetry and Devotion in Indian Painting - through December 4, 2016

Max Beckmann in New York - October 19th through February 20, 2017

[Museum of Modern Art:](#)

Francis Picabia - November 21st through March 19, 2017

One and One is Four: the Bauhaus Photocollages of Josef Albers - November 23rd through April 2, 2017

[The Whitney Museum of American Art:](#)

Carmen Herrera: Lines of Sight - through January 2, 2017

DREAMLANDS: IMMERSIVE CINEMA AND ART, 1905–2016 - OCT 28, 2016–
FEB 5, 2017

HUMAN INTEREST: PORTRAITS FROM THE WHITNEY'S COLLECTION-
through February 12, 2017

[The Guggenheim Museum:](#)

Agnes Martin - through January 11, 2017

[The Hudson River Museum:](#)

Red Grooms and the Civil War - on view currently