

REDISCOVERED THE ABSTRACT DIMENSION OF PAUL KLEE

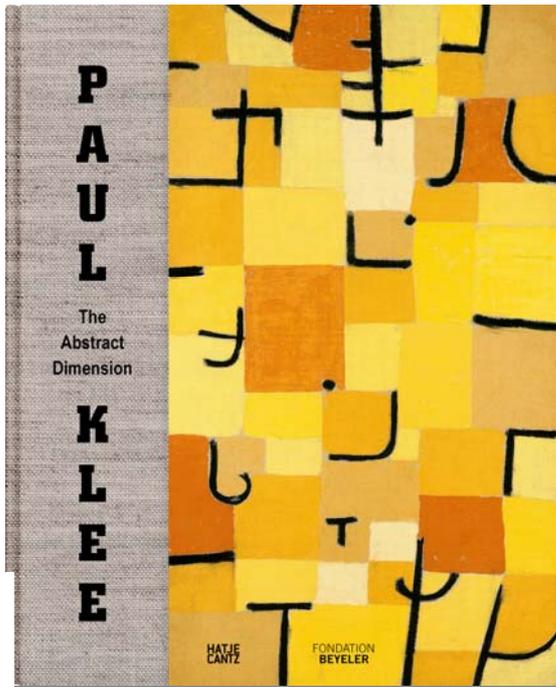
During the first half of the twentieth century the development of abstract art became an important topic. The Swiss artist Paul Klee also turned to face this challenge. His oeuvre, comprising nearly ten thousand works of art, also contains very exciting examples of the development of abstract visual spheres and the process of abstraction in painting. The publication *Paul Klee – The Abstract Dimension* is devoted to this aspect of his non-representational works.

Berlin, October 12, 2017 – Like many of his colleagues in Europe, Paul Klee (*1879 – †1940) also faced the challenges of “abstraction.” From his early phases to his late ones, we observe examples of his rejection of figuration and his creation of abstract visual spheres. Nature, architecture, music, and graphic characters are major, recurring themes in his body of work. Featuring 110 works from 12 different countries, the catalogue *Paul Klee – The Abstract Dimension* is the first to focus on this previously neglected aspect.

Beginning in 1912, this retrospective-like publication—a companion to the eponymous exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler—features various groups of works in chronological order: Following Klee’s early days as a painter in the 1910s in Munich and his famous journey to Tunisia in 1914, are the World War I years, as well as the Bauhaus decade, with its famous chessboard pictures, multilayered watercolors, and works that hint at Klee’s later exploration of geometrical abstraction in the 1930s. The paintings Klee produced after his trips to Italy and Egypt in the late 1920s and early 1930s ultimately led to the emblematic works of the artist’s late phase and his visual blueprints for post-war art.

For the large exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler the team of curators was able to call upon thirty-five internationally known museums and public collections—including the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Albertina in Vienna, the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, and the Paul Klee Center in Bern—for many valuable loans. Additionally, the show includes more than fifty works of art from private collections from around the world, which are rarely or never seen in public. Anna Szech, the exhibition’s curator, explains: “It was surprising and quite exciting to discover new aspects of Klee’s well-researched oeuvre. By focusing on Klee’s contribution to abstract art, which has been practically neglected until now, we are showing that he deserves an honored and very prominent place in the history of twentieth-century abstract art.”

Besides the art historians and Klee experts Fabienne Eggelhöfer and Regina Prange, other special authors agreed to contribute to the Klee catalogue. What they all have in common is that their names have not been found previously among the Klee researchers, yet they are all masters of their subjects in their own fields, and are examining Klee’s work from their own perspectives. Thus, the Greek-Russian conductor Teodor Curentzis explains his thoughts on the theme of music, the American artist Jenny Holzer looks at the graphic elements in Klee’s paintings, and the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor devotes himself to the architectural components of Klee’s works.



**PAUL KLEE
THE ABSTRACT DIMENSION**

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Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION GERD HATJE as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

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