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AXIS

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY
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two coloured illustrations
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● writers

Herbert Read
Jean Hélion
Wassily Kandinsky
Anatole Jakovski
Will Grohmann
Myfanwy Evans etc.

● subjects

Picasso
Kandinsky
Ben Nicholson
Sir Michael Sadler's
Collection
Paul Klee
Exhibitions in London,
Paris, Lucerne.
Book reviews, etc.



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The lay-out of *AXIS* Nos. 1 and 2 by John Piper.

Each civilisation, each culture, has its favoured cultural climate, its ideal atmosphere. Rome for the sixteenth century, Versailles for the eighteenth, Paris for the beginning of the twentieth. Kandinsky lives there and his art becomes more highly universalized. His latest painting offers us an unexpected image of Paris—one of the most beautiful effigies of his aerial purpose.

ANATOLE JAKOVSKI.

Works by Kandinsky are to be found in museums and private collections in Germany, England, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland, Japan, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

- Books on KANDINSKY.
1. "Kandinsky," 1901-1913, 75 reproductions and text (autobiography and notes by Kandinsky), 1913, "Der Sturm," Berlin.
 2. "Kandinsky," 1902-1916, reproductions and text (autobiography in Russian), 1919, Moscow.
 3. "Kandinsky," by H. Zehder, 1920, Dresden.
 4. "W. Kandinsky," by W. Grohmann, in the series "Junge Kunst," 1924, Leipzig.
 5. "Wassily Kandinsky," by Grohmann, Editions "Cahiers d'Art" (with *testimonies*, biographical notices), 1921, Paris.
 6. "Kandinsky," by W. Grohmann, F. Modlton, G. Marlier and *homages* (biographical notice, bibliography, catalogue of engravings and drawings), No. 14 in the series "Selection," 1933, Antwerp.
 7. "Kandinsky" monograph with text by W. Grohmann and Anatole Jakovski, Tenerife, Spain (appearing shortly). Also a large number of articles in books (histories of art, etc.), and art reviews in different countries. Lastly an article on recent work by Chr. Zervos ("Cahiers d'Art," No. 5-8, 1934).
- Books by KANDINSKY.
1. "Ueber das Geistige in der Kunst," 3 editions, Piper & Co., Munich, 1912 and 1913 (O.P.).
 2. "The Art of Spiritual Harmony," preface by M. Sadler, Constable & Co., London, 1914.
 3. "Der Blaue Reiter," edited by Kandinsky and Franz Marc, Piper & Co., Munich, 1912; 2nd edition, 1926 (O.P.).
 4. "Klänge," poems in prose with 56 woodcuts in colour and black and white. Single edition, Piper & Co., Munich, 1913 (O.P.).
 5. "Om Konstraktionen," 1916, Gummerus, Stockholm, 1916.
 6. "Kleine Wolken," 12 original points (wood, dry-point, lithograph), Propyläen Verlag, Berlin, 1922.
 7. "Punkt und Linie zu Fläche," Altest Langen Verlag, Munich, 1923, 2nd edition, 1926.
- Some chapters of "Ueber das Geistige" have been published in Russian and Japanese.

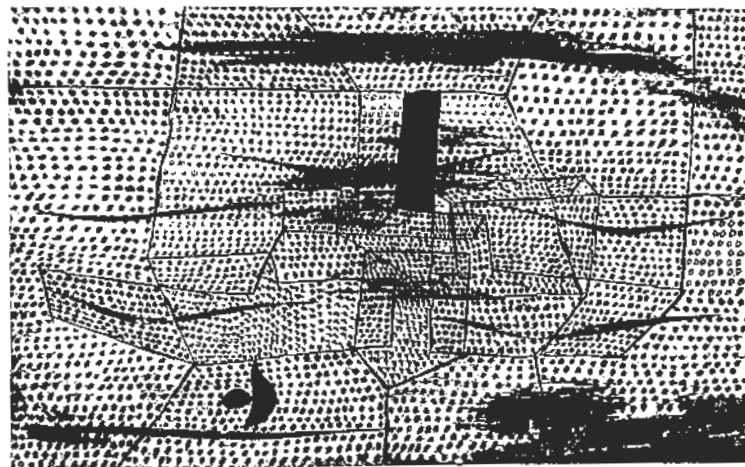
KLEE AT BERNE

Paul Klee in the Berne "Kunsthalle" is an event. It is probably the finest and most comprehensive exhibition which Klee has ever had; even so, only works between 1919 and 1933 are included. More than 250 works, 110 paintings and about 150 coloured drawings (many of which are almost like paintings) fill the two floors of the building. It is a pity that the early works are missing, for nothing would prove the originality and consistency of Klee's work so clearly as its steady development since the very beginning, about 1900. But as every exhibition has to keep within certain limits, the mature work of the painter could only be covered in this way. The year 1919 actually provides a break: it was then that Klee, up to then a miniature painter of very great importance, changed to oil-painting, to canvas. With the change of format came a change of mentality. The unconscious and the supersensuous, from the very beginning an integral part of his painting, combines with empiricism and reason to make an exceptional unity. It is a graphic, visual and controllable unity, for what is the use of any artistic gift, unless it works with clear means of expression. For thirty years Klee has been putting all his strength into the exploitation of those means, with the result that to-day he can paint almost anything, not only facts, but also processes, inner complexes, any number of modes of consciousness.

What can the ordinary lover of art make of a picture called "Angel becoming," or "Aviatic evolution," or "Anguish," or a "Polyphony" or a "Magic Mirror"? Nothing. But Klee paints it so convincingly that picture and title are identical, and as in music the possibility of ambiguity arises only when the onlooker does not use the title, or when he sees something else. There is a secret hidden behind all art, that cannot be put into words; titles, just as headings of poems, are indications, nothing more, but with Klee actually indications, like the signs in his pictures.

Klee has invented a great number of such signs, and they become more and more expressive. In the beginning they consisted of letters, arrows, crosses, stars, exclamation marks and so on; later on, fragments, combinations of different dimensions, such as those of time and space, of psychological and cosmic events, crossing of heterogeneous species, such as those of man and plant, of the organic and inorganic. And finally form with Klee became self-creative, like the formal conception in Mozart, for instance. That is to say,

KLEE.
Ancient
Monument
to a Ship,
1931.



Klee works freely with the elementary means provided by his art; a something comes into existence and at a certain point he suddenly realizes where it is leading to; he goes for it and works it out. A form or a something arises that cannot be compared to reality. Such a reality sprung from form can be developed and new facts and processes arise again and again. As soon as one leaves behind the standard of natural fact innumerable possibilities of realization appear, which, once they have been put down by the artist, can be tested by the eye.

In spite of that, there would not be any great art if Klee were not also creative in technique. Not everything could be expressed with the old techniques. Klee invents new ones. He mixes gypsum, sand or chalk into the pigment or the ground, he combines oil and water colours, he varnishes, sprays and sticks on, he scrapes and scratches off, bits of cloth are attached where necessary, and so on. But often too, we have plain canvases or sketches and they are sufficient, for the variety of material used depends on the intention of the work.

The exhibition starts with "Stage Scenery," "Kiosk," "Feast of the Asters" (about 1920), a fantasia of the unconscious, of an extreme beauty of colour, works which by to-day have become famous. The "Assyrian Play" of 1923 is already a magical mosaic; the "Perspective Figuration" (1925) is an example of musical influence like the later "Polyphony." The years onwards from 1930 are the most fruitful. The enormous number of inventions of creative means in Klee can be watched through the pictures of this last period. And not one of those inventions disappears again; they all hold their own and unite with earlier or later ones. There are kite-like inventions which illustrate fall, rise and suspension; inventions of spatial depth and of plastic volume which surpass illusionism, classical rhythms as in "Resting Sphinx," and protuberant explosions of colour as in "Figure of the Eastern Theatre"; physically dynamic shapes as in "High and Deep" and others which are sprung from psychoanalysis, as in "Dread." Finally a simple spiral line grows into a weirdly impressive "Mask of a Woman." There is no theory, but material perception and plasticity everywhere. That is the greatest thing in Klee; far from being narrow-minded, he lets things in him and around him have free rein; he respects their inner life and at the same time the central urge to form is always visible.

The impression of the exhibition is overwhelming. Even the sceptic has to give way to so much ability and such a great accomplishment. Again Klee proves to be one of the few who have given a new life to art and a new aspect to our time.

WILL GROHMANN.