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REALISATIONS IN THE LATER CAREER OF PAUL KLEE

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" I N T R O D U C T I O N "

Paul Klee's early work, it could be said is consecrated exclusively to the mind. Klee spent years theorising and writing about his theories. In 1920 he had his creative credo published, the same year he was called to teach at the Bauhaus. Klee spent ten years as a lecturer in the Bauhaus and wrote many essays on painting, pictorial form, form production and the nature of nature. In these essays and pedagogic notebooks Klee examines the position of the twentieth century artist and analyses the mechanisms of art.¹

Along with being a talented painter, teacher and writer Klee was also a talented violinist. Klee was an artist who took his work with the utmost seriousness, and, his early life was a search for an intellectual Utopia. He became somewhat divorced from social reality, but, he was quite happy in his scholarly world. Then in 1933 there were the first signs of a shift in Klee's consciousness. Klee's work became more emotional and far stronger. Klee had learned a lesson only after major upheavals, like the rise of the Nazis and the realisation of death.

¹ Klee's notebooks have been published in two volumes. Volume one The Thinking Eye, and volume two The Nature of Nature.

CHAPTER 1

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler's coalition government was appointed to office. Like so many other Germans, Klee, apparently refused to believe that the National Socialists would go through with their extremist policies. Policies which they had announced during the years leading up to their take-over of the Weimar Republic. Klee remained aloof from those artists and intellectuals who immediately attempted to resist National Socialism in the name of freedom and democracy. Klee was detached from politics through years of resignation. He doubted that art would actually be completely subsumed under the imminent political changes of 1933. Things for a short while at least did not seem, to Klee, to be quite as bad as they were. Klee had kept a studio in Dessau, where the Bauhaus had moved in April 1925 from Weimar, after he had ended his connection with the Bauhaus in 1929. Klee also had looked forward with great pleasure to his appointment as a professor at the Dusseldorf academy. He had longed for the peacefulness of working at the academy, where he would have about him only a group of master students. On April 1, 1931, at the invitation of Walter Kaesbach, Klee started teaching at the Academy of Art, Dusseldorf. He travelled between Dessau and Dusseldorf spending alternate biweekly periods in each city, and since he had two magnificent work rooms in each city, he delighted in the half-finished "*children*" that awaited him each time in whichever studio he was away from. Klee enormously enjoyed the lovely and vital city on the Rhine with its "*pulsating western life*". He found it as fascinating as Paris and the piquant atmosphere stirred him to paint in a free unweighted style.

As soon as the new government was installed, there were signs contrary to Klee's belief that art would be subsumed under the political changes. Life was beginning to look less delightful for Klee. On February 1, 1933, two days after the new coalition government was appointed, the National Socialist newspaper Die Rote Erde carried a full-page racist attack against the Dusseldorf academy under the headline "*Art swap in western Germany*". It attacked the school as a haven for Jewish artists and for being responsible for the Jewish corruption of German art and culture. It stated about Klee, "*He tells everyone that he has pure arabic blood, but is a typical Galician Jew*". The newspaper finished the article with the categorical demand to eradicate the whole system. A National Socialist official replaced the academy director on the same day. Even still this did not seem to have a great deal of an effect on Klee. He was attempting to assess the situation with some comparative historical studies of his own. Klee was reading about Caesar, Hannibal, and Napoleon and was pondering with great admiration the lives of the great dictators of the past and found to his relief that Hitler did not measure up to them. The feelings of many Germans at the time, was that the Nation Socialist government was not going to last, but last it did.

By the end of March a humiliating search of the house in Dessau, by storm troopers, had taken place. Klee still hoped he could be accommodated by the new authorities. Even at the most critical juncture of his career as a public official, Klee was rationalising the situation. He stated :-

"It was possible for me to speak with Junghanns (the new director) quite openly. It is of course my turn to be suspended, but he still has some hopes, through giving me a different assignment in the curriculum, without impairing my freedom of teaching. I

am quite calm; after having been through worse things, I am preparing myself from the outset for the most negative turn of events and can hence wait and see."

The rest of Klee's stay in Dusseldorf was entirely under the shadow of the events of the Nazi seizure of power. In a letter he wrote to his wife on April 6, he was hoping that he would not have to document his Aryan descent to the authorities and vowed not to undertake anything on his own in this regard :-

"I'd rather take adversity upon me than represent the tragicomical figure of one who curries favour with those in power."

Unfortunately a few days later the Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur (The fighting League of German Culture) made a charge of semitic origins against Klee. They had discovered in Klee's biography that his mother's ancestry was possibly rooted in North Africa. Hence the sentence in the newspaper Die Rote Erde :-

"He tells everyone that he has pure arabic blood, but is a typical Galician Jew"

The source of this information was made clear later in the year, in Robert Böttcher's book *Kunst und Kunsterziehung im neuen Reich* :-

*"There is the Bauhaus professor of many years, Paul Klee, who, as the Jew Hausenstein writes in his book Kairuan, has Saracenic blood in his veins "*¹

Klee had submitted an autobiographical digest of his diaries to Hausenstein and he had written from these about the possible oriental ancestry of Klee's mother. Hausen-

stein had interpreted Klee's trip to Tunisia in 1914, as a profoundly meaningful return to his biological origins. Hausenstein had used Klee's hypothetical mixed origin as a symbol of the cultural discrepancy between Europe and the Orient. Unfortunately for Klee, the speculation of twelve years earlier by Hausenstein, had now come back to haunt him in the anti-semitic investigations of the National Socialists. Fearing another house search by the storm troopers, Klee altered his original text of his autobiographical digest of his diaries. He cut out the word Oriental from the text, in reference to his mother.

The "*Law for the Reconstitution of the Civil Service*" was passed on April 7, 1933, by the government, which gave the ministry the power to discharge leading representatives of modern art regardless of their race, from all of the countries museums and academies. On April 21, Klee was suspended from his post and some time later in the Autumn he was dismissed. Of Klee's dismissal, the National Socialist art writer Robert Scholz, wrote in the article entitled "*Toppling Art Idols*", that it was :-

"Such an important step on the way toward the liberation of German art after it's fourteen-year long gagging by elements of alien blood."

In a long series of bitter criticism Scholz also singled out Klee as an extreme case :-

"And that one could once regard Paul Klee as a great artist, would be, for future generations, one of the clearest examples of the complete decline of the individualist art epoch."

The humiliating search of the house in Dessau, the dismissal from the academy, the indignity of documenting his Aryan descent to the authorities and the attack on his art were motive enough for Klee to withdraw into a little work room of his new home, which he moved into on May 1, 1933, at the Heinrichstrasse 36, Dusseldorf. By October 22, Klee's wife Lily began to raise the possibilities of leaving Dusseldorf. Klee was now unemployed, and could not afford to stay in Dusseldorf, also Klee was presumably worried that he would expose himself too much if he stayed on in the city, even as a private citizen. His business connections in Germany were no longer viable. His general sales contract with Flechtein in Berlin, who represented him since 1925 could not be renewed. On October 21, 1933, he travelled to Paris on October 24, he signed a new general contract with the dealer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler.

Klee was persuaded to move out of Germany to Bern in Switzerland. On December 23, Klee and his wife went into exile to his own native homeland. He was never again to return to his beloved Germany. In a letter he on December 22, 1933, he referred to his last hours in Germany :-

"Dear Felix and Phroska, now everything has been moved out of the house. Tomorrow night I shall most likely leave this place. Then the beautiful days of Christmas will come, with bells ringing in every foolish head. I've got a little older these last few weeks. But I won't vent gall, or I'll do it with humour anyway. This is easy for men to do, women usually weep at such times..."

At first Klee took refuge with his father at the old family place in Obstberg, then rented for the time being a furnished apartment on Kollerweg, and in the Spring of 1934

he took a spacious three-room apartment in Effenau at Kistlerweg 6. Once again Klee had to live in tiny quarters as when he began in Munich. He situated his studio in a medium-sized room with a window facing South and a door to a balcony facing East. And now life began to take shape quite pleasantly in the seemingly free atmosphere of Switzerland. Klee painted, cooked, and played music according to a precise daily schedule. Then in 1935, Klee developed the first symptoms of the treacherous skin disease Scleroderma which remained after he got over a case of measles.

CHAPTER 1

"FOOTNOTES"

¹ Saracenic - a nomad of Syro-Arabian desert.

CHAPTER 2

Paul Klee's early career was a search for an intellectual ideal and a highly individual and somewhat lonely trek down a path that few people really understood. In a sense one could say, that Klee became detached from social reality through being caught up in, what was for him, a fantastic journey through the outer limits of imagination in an attempt to find the truths about our existence. Be they big, small or whatever. Everything from emotions to snails to the energy that is at the base of everything we know.

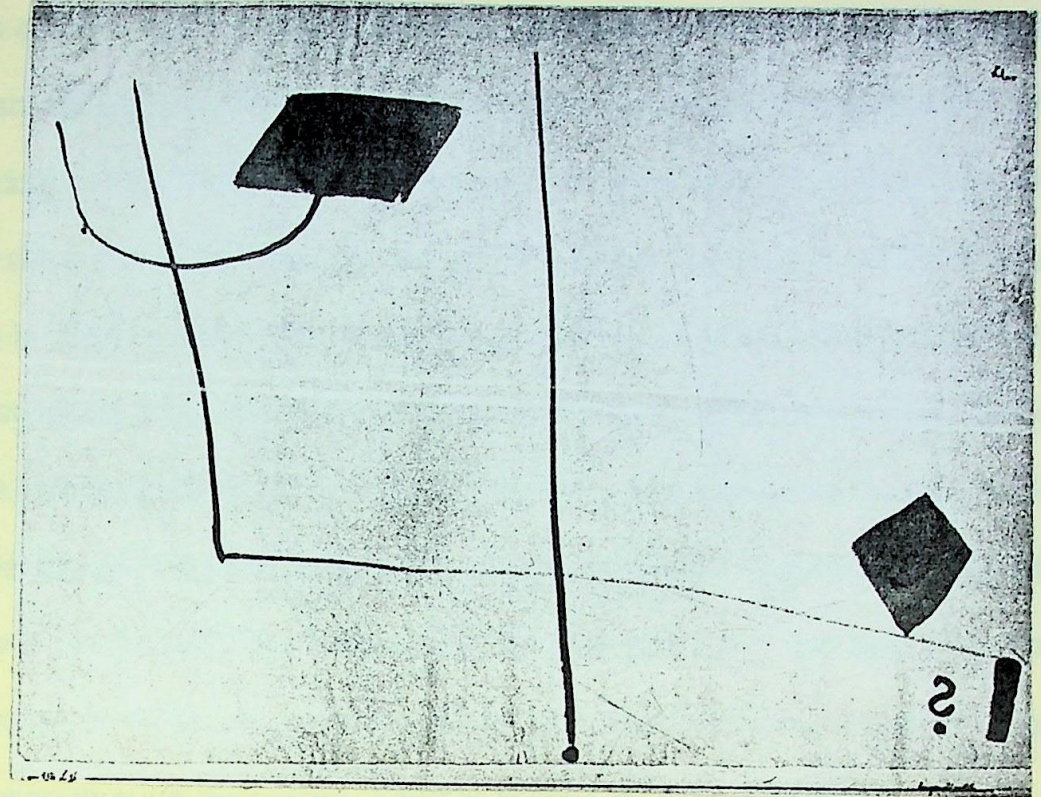
Then in 1933 Social reality became very obvious to Klee. His political consciousness changed a great deal during 1933, especially during the months from April to October. A few months in which Klee's expectation changed from one of accommodating himself to the authorities as a teacher at the academy to the diminished hopes of at least being tolerated as free artist, and, finally to the decision to emigrate.

With the National Socialists so-called liberation of German art came the most unpredictable change in styles Klee ever made. It was Klee's reaction to the unequivocal realism that the National Socialist's policies was putting forth. At a time when the anecdotal aspect of Klee's work declined in importance and the pieces became more severe and simple, Klee produced over two- hundred drawings in an illustrative manner. These were totally contrary to the drawings Klee had been producing only a couple of weeks earlier, drawings in which Klee had said he had drawn the National Socialist

revolution. Imponderable ill.1. The earlier drawings were not antigovernment caricatures, for Klee could not possibly risk them being found if he endured another house search like the one in Dessau in March. One could not expect Klee to produce an anti-government statement even one obscured by the modernist sophistication of his imagery. By making the drawings abstract Klee could challenge not the politics but the political definition of art itself. Klee's work had lost its audience and now it was a very private matter. Of these works Klee wrote in a letter to Will Grohmann on January 31, 1933 :-

"With these observations, then, I am sending this report to press and adding, for your eyes only, the event, of no concern to the public, that in recent days I was caught up in a wild drawing frenzy. However in today's world, this is such a private matter, it will, if things continue in this way ... take a long time until one day it will be noticed as cultural history and art history. Then perhaps no-one will be able to say anymore, without looking it up in the dictionary, who the great Hitler actually was".¹

Then came the series of comparatively realistic figurative scenes made up of small dense pencil strokes unlike their abstract predecessors. Several of the drawings actually address the challenge to abstract or expressionist art by the new regime. Klee was wondering what would the German art sponsored by the state look like. In fact it took the new German art administration until 1937 to achieve a unified policy, but its hostility to modern art and its insistence on realism were clear from the start. Klee now put the newly propagated realism to the test in a mimetic, satiric, argumentative way, confronting it with his own modernist tradition. ills. 2,3,4,5. Klee's political self-reflections apparently entered such an acute phase that he immediately began to act them out



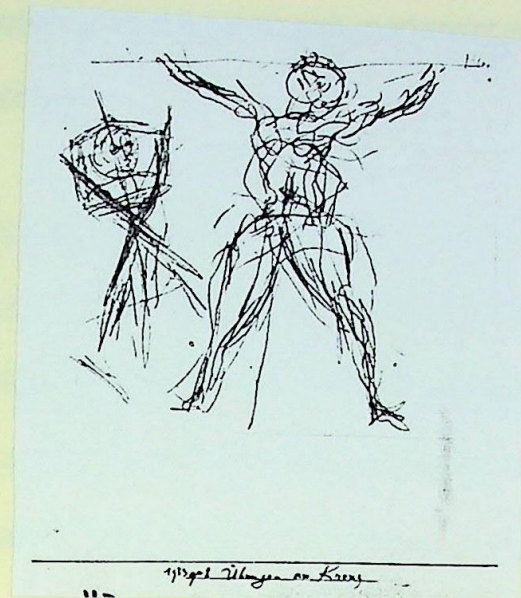
ill. 1. IMPONDERABLE.



ill. 2. THE WORK OF ART.

in his work. The drawing The Work of Art ill. 2. is very obviously concerned with the re-assertion of tradition. The smaller figure in the middle is confronted by the traditional piece of sculpture on one side and on the other by a more modernist figure. The figure in the middle seems undecided. The fact that this drawing and these other illustrative drawings are probably some of the most unKlee-esque drawings in existence might be a clue as to the frustration Klee must have felt after his political self-reflection. Often when a person has been exerting themselves at the limits of their capabilities they come to a stage where they give up for a while. Klee was swimming against the tide in both his political beliefs and artistic practises. He reverted back to a manner of representation he had been working against. A means of representation that had long since ceased having any merit for him. In a sense it was a way of clearing the system. He released his frustration through the pieces. Another reason for Klee changing to realism could have been this. After spending all of his artistic life travelling along an intellectual path, with no real emotional input, Klee was suddenly faced with great emotional upheavals all caused by the rise of the National Socialists. At first Klee tried to come to terms with these upheavals by working in an abstract manner. Because Klee's abstract was involved in an intellectual pursuit, he might have found that when trying to represent his emotions, the abstract process was gone too far into the intellectual, and too cold and limiting. Klee's purely intellectual work now probably seemed futile in the face of these social realities. In a sense Klee had to retrace his steps adding a more emotional element to his work. Klee turned to the National Socialist condoned realism and now privately vented his frustration, anger and dismay through these drawings, which one believes were the cornerstone for what was to become the strongest body of work Klee produced.

With The Work of Art ill. 2. Klee makes a very obvious statement about the confrontation of the different styles of representation but it could also be Klee standing between the two styles which at that moment both seemed futile. Purely representational work had long since been of very little interest to Klee and now the intellectual abstraction was also futile. This piece set the stage for the other pieces that were to come. This one a statement of where Klee stood and then the rest were his thoughts put down and figured out on paper. All of which are far more satirical than the first. Exercise At The Cross ill. 3. is a more difficult piece to decipher, as to the origin of it's confrontation with the policies of the new German art administration. the figure on the left, who's body is formed by a diagonal cross, relates back to an earlier stage in his career. The confrontation between this figure and the more realistic representation is far more satirical than the more obvious The Work Of Art ill. 2. The realistic, National Socialist condoned figure, is drawn in the stance of a diagonal cross, exercising as in the title or vying as in competition with the figure on the left. The real confrontation comes in the polarisation of the realistic schema and the childish schema. The childish schema related back to Klee's early career. Klee understood the ironic possibilities of a childish style and analysed every basic method and schema used by children to represent their world and explored in his own art the potential of these elementary forms and processes for expressing sophisticated ideas that could not be fully realised or even suggested in a natural mode. It was in this search for the clarity of pure elementary representation that Klee found the drawings of helpless children so instructive. Ever since the universal adoption in the West of illusionism as a standard of professional excellence, artists have made fun of children's drawings. Children's drawings were looked upon as no more than inept scrawls, bungling attempts at illusionism. Klee's interest in children's draw-



ill. 3. EXERCISE AT THE CROSS.



ill. 4. DIALOGUE ABOUT CONCEPT X.



ill. 5. STIFF ALREADY.

ings and the drawings of the mentally ill was of course part of the modernist ideal of cultural renewal, which not only went against anti-modernist critics but also against the National Socialist government.

Dialogue About Concept X ill. 4. shows us a dialogue about the underlying scheme of abstraction, the unknown quantity X. The piece reiterates the confrontation, with the figure on the left excited about the idea of the concept X and the figure on the right is unconvinced. The excitement is expressed by the moving legs while the unconvinced has its legs crossed protecting itself. Each one of these drawings is Klee questioning his art form. These are the beginning of Klee's realisation of the futility of work dedicated to purely intellectual pursuits and the beginning of accommodating emotional input into his work and keeping in touch with social reality. The concept X became the theme for a major painting later in 1933. Struck From The List ill. 6. came after Klee's dismissal from the Dusseldorf academy and also after his deletion from the list of German artists acceptable to the government. This is a painting using some of the answers that Klee got from the questions he posed for himself in the drawings. It is the beginning of all the elements coming together. The anger of dismissal and deletion comes across in the expression of sadness on the face coupled by the angry slashing X. The X is on the back of the head as a means of suppressing the imagination. This emotion finds some balance with the emotional input, with X as an algebraic sign for an unresolved equation.

Klee continued to work in the face of these adversities and Klee found that he could incorporate all these findings of his early intellectual career with the now strong

felt emotions. The balance was being corrected but then in 1935 came the realisation of death which sent Klee's work into a highly spiritual realm.

The confrontation with death is perhaps the most important element of spirituality. First, death reveals the ego. That part of us which grasps and holds on, which attempts to crystallise the flow of life and box it into separate entities, is totally panicked by death. Fear is the basis of this holding and contracting, and death, or the thought of death brings out this fear. In fact the fear that one feels at the thought of death is not created by the situation, but, only brought out of hiding; it was there all along in our life, underlying all the rigidities, the pettinesses and the little neuroses. That fear, which is the linchpin holding the whole rigid structure in place, is revealed in the face of death, and can be looked into and dealt with. The freedom from this incapacitating fear releases great powers. As John Russell wrote in his article "The Legacy of Paul Klee is Everywhere" in the New York Times :-

"Back in his native Switzerland after many years in Germany, he was producing drawings in large numbers - in all 1,583, according to his own minutely kept catalogue, between 1938 and 1940. Neither illness nor the steady deterioration of Europe could staunch that flow."

Paul Klee's son Felix wrote in his recollections In Klee's Diaries :-

"A bodily struggle that lasted five years was only lingered out by the iron determination of his spirit, had only a slight influence upon the evermore intense and vehe-

ment production of his work. His physician forbade him to play his violin and to smoke, and Klee became more and more obsessed with the demon of toil."

The realisation that one is to die and therefore has little time can cut away an immense amount of pettiness and self-indulgence from one's life. All those thoughts people have at the time of death, regrets over wasted time and lots opportunities, over risks not taken and inertia given into, all those "if only I could do it over again" thoughts, can be brought into the present, before the opportunities are past, while the gates are still open. Death is the great changer, the one who ensures that things will not remain static, stagnant, fixed.

For Klee the realisation of death did have a great effect on his work. The works Klee produced in the last few years of his life show the effects of this realisation. The forms were at their most simple state and it's content was at it's most pressing and deeply-felt stage. Klee's awareness of the reality and inevitability of his own death was a fantastic energiser that released what in the face of his illness was an unsuspected level of motivation. What happened to Klee was explained with great clarity in the seventeenth century by Don Juan the Yoqui indian teacher.² To answer the question what am I supposed to do if not worry about death ? He answered :-

"Use it. Focus your attention on the link between you and your death, without remorse or sadness or worrying. Focus your attention on the fact that you don't have time and let your acts flow accordingly. Let each of your acts be your last battle on earth. Only under these conditions will your acts have their rightful power. Otherwise they will be, for as long as you live, the acts of a timid man."



ill.6. STRUCK FROM THE LIST.



ill.7. OVEREXCITED.

The unsuspected level of motivation and the unsuspected amount of energy Klee had to put into his work is expressed in the painting Overexcited ill. 7. Klee was interested in polyphony of themes in his work and the more obvious theme of the work might, on the surface, be the childish exhilaration of dance, but is closer to a theme of potential adult bondage and collapse. The figure dances on a tightrope that is held at one end by a man upside-down and at the other end by an animal on a wheel. The line of the tightrope has a second role; a tree perched on it makes it into the line of the horizon, suggesting that the earth cannot support the child's dance. The piece could also suggest the excited motivation that Klee was experiencing. The figure could be Klee himself. The figure's hands and arm are like drumsticks, they are beating the air furiously, annoyed that time is running out or they are beating out a rhythm coming to a crescendo, the climax of Klee's career. Klee is balancing on the tightrope trying to keep himself balanced and stop himself from falling into pettiness or self-indulgence. The work is flowing out of Klee at this stage and each piece is like Klee's final battle on earth.

Before 1935 Klee's work showed his concern about the fate of Europe, but he was not too concerned about his own fate. He felt he would somehow survive all the different knocks he was getting. After 1935 the fate of Europe and Klee's own fate went hand-in-hand and as Werner Schmalenbach wrote :-

*"Although to the last Klee was always ready to give vent to his humour which nevertheless became increasingly mocking and bitter - his art acquires a grandeur and power of expression not previously associated with him."*³

On July 8, 1937, Lily Klee wrote a letter to Will Grohman in which she reported Klee's sudden resurgence of productivity :-

"[Klee] has once again one of his completely strong epochs. A drawing period also occurs. At night he sits at his desk till eleven o'clock, and one sheet after another drops to the floor as in old times. And yet he is still not yet completely cured, is constantly being checked by the doctor ... he is reading Ignazio Silone's , Fontamara."

That Klee was reading Fontamara was significant, because the book was the most celebrated anti-fascist novel of the day and the art world was becoming more anti-fascist reacting to the public suppression of modern art by the German government, and the international critics who supported modern art, began to voice increasingly outspoken attacks on Nationalist Socialist policies.

One of the biggest knocks that Klee received came in the Summer of 1937. On July 26, the First Great German Art Exhibition opened in Munich. The following day the National Socialist government opened the exhibition of degenerate art [Entrartete Kunst]. In the first exhibition was presented officially sanctioned German art and in the other the modernist art sponsored by the Weimar Republic. The double presentation signalled the enforced triumph of the first and the Nationalist Socialist suppression of the latter was brought to a conclusion. A year later on July 9, 1938 Hitler referred back to the situation and said :-

*"So at that time I reached the decision to draw a firm line and to give German art the only possible task : to compel it to stick to the path that the National Socialist revolution had assigned to the new life of Germany."*⁴

The summary of the exhibition in the official brochure went as follows :-

*"What does the exhibition 'Degenerate Art' want ? ... It wants to expose the common root of political anarchy and cultural anarchy, and to unmask the degeneration of art as art bolshevism in the full sense of the word. It wants to clarify the ideological, political, racial, and moral goals and purposes pursued by the driving forces of disintegration ."*⁵

The exhibition itself included seventeen works by Klee, in the forms of nine water-colours, five paintings and three prints. On August 3, 1937, there was a decree from Herman Goring which initiated the confiscation of modern art works in all public art collections in Germany. The extent of Klee's previous official recognition was revealed when after Goring's decree, one-hundred and two works by Klee were confiscated from collections. The work in the exhibition was arranged topically and Klee's work was exhibited under the categories *"Confusion"* and *"Insanity"*. In the guide book to the exhibition Klee's lithograph The Saint of the Inner Light ill. 8. was juxtaposed with a picture by a schizophrenic patient, with the comment :-

"Two 'Saints'!! the upper one is called The Saint of the Inner Light and is by Paul Klee. The lower one is by a schizophrenic from an asylum. That this Saint Magdalen

*with a child still appears more human-like than the contraption by Paul Klee, which claimed to be taken quite seriously, is very telling."*⁶

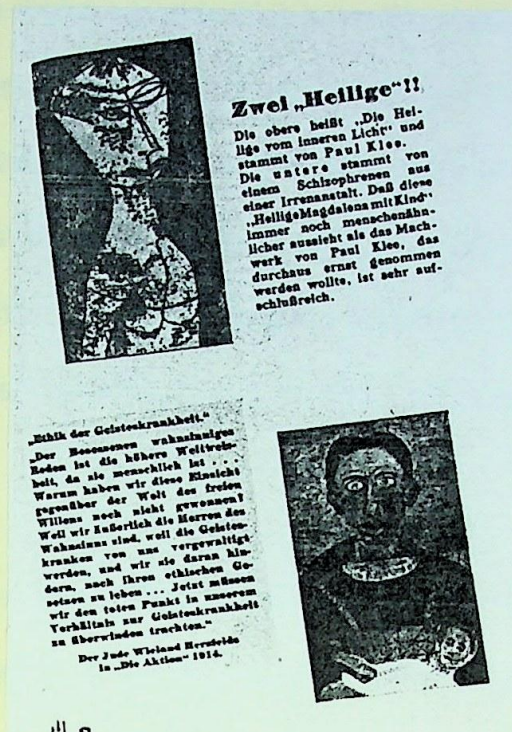
The National Socialist art officials used the conventional reproach of anti-modernist critics and showed at the same time the piece in a light that would not harm Klee's intentions in his work but enhance them to some extent, reiterating the modernist ideal of cultural renewal. Klee after all had always been drawn to the flawed, to physical and mental imperfections, even going back as far as his symbolist etchings, 1903-1905 which he exhibited in 1906. Klee himself had subscribed to it's usage in his review for the Swiss magazine Die Alpen of the double exhibition of the Neue Kunstlervereinigung Munchen and it's offshoot the Blaue Reiter, held in Munich in December 1911.

*"For there are still primordial origins of art, as you would rather find them in the ethnographic museum or at home in the nursery ... parallel phenomena are the drawings of the insane, and thus madness is no appropriate invective [against the new aspirations] either."*⁷

Despite the detractors Klee continued to work hard. With the realisation of death Klee's work became far more spiritual. The late works reveal an ever-present sense of the proximity of death, of the inescapable approaching forces that pose a threat to life. Klee was fully aware that his illness would accompany him to his death, that it would accelerate his death and shorten his remaining years and working capacity. He would have to summarise what he had to say without elaboration, expressing it in a concise, direct and compressed form.

It has been said that Klee's pictures come from a limbo and depicted an anti-world. Klee's work in general, conceals the tragic disjunction in life between intellectual constructions. It might be objected that Klee did not experience any such tragic disjunctions but only spoke about them. It is true that conclusive proof of his sincerity, in the sense of a congruity between his experience and his artistically shaped content, is difficult to find in his early and middle periods before 1933. But his late work provides that proof. Without the heightened, almost obsessive production of his last four years, and without the new, undisguised humanity of his late pictures, his life's work would appear in a very different light. The late works succeed in expressing the threat and despair occasioned by his impending death even while preserving the dispassionate composure he had cultivated from early on.

To say that Klee's work depicts an anti-world, while not being totally untrue, would send the observer off on the wrong track. This suggests a lack of positive commitment and we can therefore only view them as having temporary validity. The inner balance was attained with great effort; a balance between the visible and the invisible; the secular and the spiritual; between play and earnest; colour and sign; chance and significance. In the final analysis Klee does not show us an anti-world, however alien to the reality of appearances it may be. It corresponds far more closely to the inner, spiritual laws that govern our world of genesis and decline. He creates allegories of the forces which determine the cycle of waxing and waning in nature. In Outbreak of Fear ill. 9. Klee succeeds in expressing the threat and despair occasioned by his own impending death even while preserving the dispassionate composure he had cultivated from early on. Outbreak of Fear is typical of many of Klee's late pieces. These late pictures are



ill. 8. THE SAINT OF THE INNER LIGHT.



ill. 9. OUTBREAK OF FEAR.

built up from a series of fractured and fragmented forms, which Klee often employs with miraculous economy to evoke a world which is itself broken and disjointed. These forms are usually painted black, which endows them with a sombre and fateful import, and set against a coloured background which either glows with a fiery intensity or else appears matt and chalky in consistency which at times appears deathly. Often the choice of support, too, can enhance the gravity of the mood, with Klee choosing a wide variety of materials, from newspaper to burlap, to serve his expressive needs during these years.

There had always been death in Klee's work, just as death everywhere pervades life. Now with the realisation of his own death Klee reflected on the fact of death in a way which was previously unknown in the sphere of the visual arts. Klee did not resist the inevitable but attempted to accept it and integrated it, not only in man's general existence but also quite concretely in his own. Always realising and not suppressing his own fear, Many of Klee's pictures and sketches display a light, capricious and delicate quality which is carried through into his later work. Occasionally this has been construed as trivial charm and aesthetic unreality. The experience of sorrow which is contained in Klee's late work now gives it a depth, a seriousness, an ethos of reality which is impossible to ignore. In this context reality must be understood as an all-embracing reality. It is the reality of inner life for which Klee had finally found the penetrating signs, the visual symbols.

Throughout Klee's career growth was partly the essence of his work. But in the late work growth seems impeded and the threatening aspect manifests itself. An aspect, which it seems must be overcome. The individual appears to have been repulsed

from nature's great web. It appears isolated, dejected, excluded and imprisoned. Captive ill. 10. is one such individual. Klee, with his realisation of both, the futility of a purely intellectual approach and the realisation of death, expresses the isolation, dejection, exclusion and a form of imprisonment, [Exile], that he felt with the events caused by the rise of the National Socialists and couples them with that realisation of death which makes this a highly spiritual piece. Captive which recalls Death and Fire ill. 11. In both works Klee works out the last act of the drama in images of harrowing intensity, as though painting his own requiem. In Death and Fire a spectral head, its white face is a double play with the face of the figure changing from that of some sort of a clown or fool to that of a skeleton, already outlined against the red hell-fire. The lines of the picture are coarser than in earlier work and they are diluting into the background. The tones of the painting have become darker and heavier and the colour has become more bitter and even a bit more ugly. The strong heavy doom-laden lines are contrasted with the melancholic colours and heavy tones of the background. The spiritual quality of these and other late works is of course conveyed in Klee's technical approach to these works as well as his new perspective on his work. Typically these pictures are built up from a series of fractured and fragmented forms, -bars, forks and arcs - and the effect of these black bars embedded in areas of intense colour, inevitably calls to mind that spiritual medium with its leading and luminosity, stained glass, through the runic simplicity of many of Klee's late works more closely evokes the aura and mystery of an ancient hieroglyphic script carved upon an abandoned funeral stele or a sacred old wall.

This approach in Captive to show a pained and suffering figure, broken in both body and spirit, which stares out of the picture poignantly misaligned features. Sur-



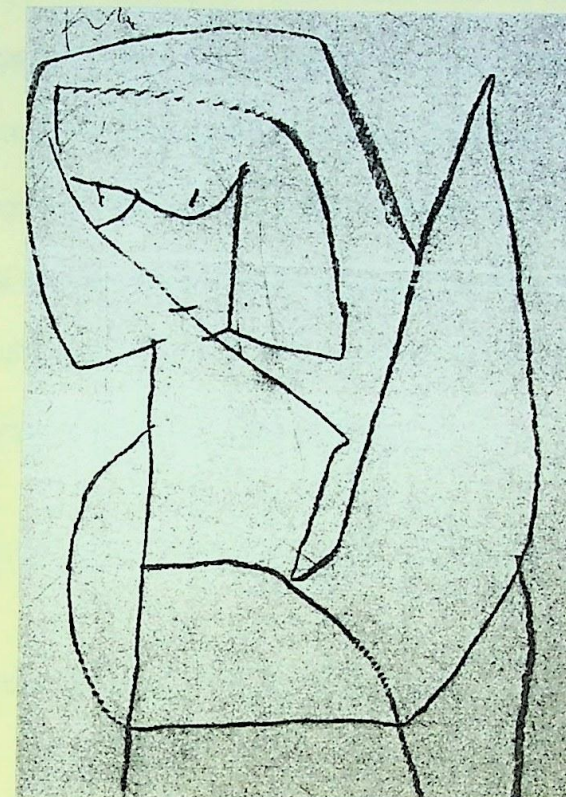
ill. 10. CAPTIVE.



ill. 11. DEATH AND FIRE.

rounding it on all sides is a menacing black grid, it's deathly prongs pressing ever inwards. Adding to the portentous mood of the whole or the predominant hues of the picture. These are pale, other worldly blues, ghostly remembered hues, which at once call to mind the realms of the eternal and infernal in nature, while slowly spreading across the picture is a mist of bone- dust white, which appears to encroach upon the forms like an insidious blight. These pieces are not all doom and gloom. In Captive there is a warm glowing in the bottom of the individual's stomach. A spiritual inner-light maybe or it may be a sign of hope. Hope because of the cognition that growth by it's very nature entails, waning, decay, the departure from life, and that this decay and demise guides the fate of every individual. Klee's late work became more spiritual in anticipation of life after death. All through his career Klee had produced angel paintings and drawings. A gradual purification or spiritualization of the soul, Klee believed, took place after death. Klee believed that a person's first state after death is like a state in the world, since at that point he is similarly involved in outward matters. He has much the same face, speech and spirit, this is why he is then quite unaware that he is not still in the world, after the dead are judged as to their quality by good spirits and then they are gradually brought into an involvement in the more inward things that belong to the mind. Angels are spiritual intelligences and therefore for Klee to become an angel it would be the ultimate prize for his lifelong quest.

Doubting Angel ill. 12. was drawn only a few days before Klee entered the sanatorium where he died. It is one of the last works his illness allowed him to complete. The drawing conveys that state when everything is in question. With the realisation of death Klee knew he had limited time, ut now when he is nearly at death's door he is



ill. 12. DOUBTING ANGEL.

questioning his beliefs about the spiritual. Will all his work in the quest for the spiritual end up being as futile in the face of death as his work had been futile in the face of the social reality of the National Socialist government. A realisation that was mirrored in the fact that not all of the angels among Klee's drawings struggle for spirituality yet remain burdened with their human fallibilities. His concern with the state of the world with war and fascism, also impelled him to depict angels of justice and judgement. Klee learned that one has to keep in touch with social reality and balanced it with his quest for spirituality never forgetting it to the very end. Klee's late paintings are simple and powerful and are the work of a solitary and meditative painter who had himself once claimed to *"glow amidst the dead"*⁸ and who had repeatedly sought refuge from the world about him in the world beyond as Klee's epitaph reads :-

I CANNOT BE GRASPED IN THE HERE AND NOW,

FOR I LIVE JUST AS WELL WITH THE DEAD

AS WITH THE UNBORN

SOMEWHAT CLOSER TO THE HEART OF

CREATION THAN USUAL

BUT FAR FROM CLOSE ENOUGH.

" F O O T N O T E S "

¹ Carolyn Lancher, Paul Klee, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. p.49.

² The Yoqui indians lived in North-Western Mexico and made a treaty in 1610 with the Spaniards; after defeating the Spaniards in 1533 and 1609, they asked for jesuit missionaries to settle in their villages.

³ Werner Schmalenbach, Paul Klee

⁴ Carolyn Lancher, Paul Klee, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. p.54.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, p.55.

⁸ Paul Klee, The Diaries 1898 - 1918. p.308 no.931

CHAPTER 3

Since Paul Klee's death we have had a great many changes in the art world. Some for better some for worse. Has Klee's work become outdated, being work of its time, or, is there something to be gleaned from Klee's experiences ? Are we beyond Klee's work or have we progressed at all ? I believe that the greatest lessons we can learn from Klee are those realisations which Klee had in the last years of his life from 1933 to 1940. the realisation of the futility of a purely intellectual, or any singular approach to realms dealing with the mind. the realisation of the need to keep in touch with social reality and how to face the reality of death and not run away from it. To use it to your utmost capabilities and not to become inactively resigned to the fact.

To look at the art world today I have used Herman Hesse's book The Glass Bead Game as an allegory of that world. In the book, Hesse wrote about a situation I believe the world arrived at many times before and which we are very close to again. The Glass Bead Game is a biography of Joseph Knecht. The glass bead game of the title, is an act of mental synthesis through which the spiritual of all ages are perceived as simultaneously present and alive. It was with full artistic consciousness that Hesse described the game in such a way as to make it seem vividly real within the novel and yet to defy any specific imitation in reality. The game is purely a symbol of the human imagination. The game is the focal point of an entire province of the spirit called Castalia and located in an unspecified future. Hesse indicated that he was not trying to depict a specific Uto-

pia in the future, but rather trying to represent the model of a reality that has actually existed from time to time.¹ Castalia represents any human institution devoted wholly and exclusively to affairs of the mind and imagination. In the book, Joseph Knecht spends the first two-thirds of his life striving for, and, attaining a place in an intellectual Utopia and then all of a sudden he defects from Castalia, that very place that he had managed to achieve high status in. When Hesse first thought up The Glass Bead Game and developed it from the original series of parallel lives to a biography of Joseph Knecht, he did not intend having Knecht defect from Castalia. The reason for Hesse to change the story was the reality of contemporary events around him. The disintegration of the Weimar Republic, the rise of Hitler, the horrors of Nazism, opened Hesse's eyes to the failure of the intellectuals and convinced him of the futility of any spiritual realm divorced wholly from contemporary social reality. A realisation that may seem obvious to people when they hear it, but for some reason seems to be obscured from some individual's search for a spiritual realm. Maybe it is because when dealing with a life consecrated exclusively to the mind, it is easy to build a world around oneself and live in what is a reality for oneself but is futile in the face of a larger reality which is going on all around oneself, the reality of laws, culture and changes within that culture, which one has been brought up in, and which is the reality for everyone in one's vicinity. Hesse had spent a lot of his life in search for such a spiritual realm as did Klee. Both to some extent had gotten lost in their worlds and it took major upheavals such as Nazism and the state of Europe to bring them back to reality.

It is this realisation which is the meaning that emerges from young Knecht's debates with that emissary from the outside world, Plinio Designori. Knecht was taken to

Castalia, which is a type of monastery, at a young age, where he had been trained into a spiritual realm with no contact with the outside world. Plinio Designori was from the outside world, but came to Castalia to be educated. Although contact with the outside world was not appreciated, the order of Castalia taught Designori in recognition of the fact that his parents had donated money towards the founding of Castalia. The debates between the two boys were a way for Hesse to argue out his realisation with Knecht being the purely spiritual side and Designori being the outside reality. Designori argues that a life consecrated exclusively to the mind is not only unfruitful, but also dangerous.

Looking at the art world today one comes up with the realisation that there is something gone terribly wrong? Is this because it ended up as a purely spiritual realm or did something else go wrong. The situation in the art world today is such that we have people on one side saying painting is dead and on the other side saying things were never better for painters, an artist can choose any style he or she likes. All I know is that of these two statements "*painting is dead*" is closer to the truth.

It is evident that creative art like creative physics is moving into pure thought on the one hand and on the other hand, it is running around in circles killing itself. But why is the statement "painting is dead" closer to the truth?

Taking the human make-up, we have on the one side the conscious intellectual, and, on the other side the subconscious. Post-painterly abstraction was of course the conscious intellectual side taken as a singular path to follow. The post-painterly abstractionist's fascination with aesthetic doctrine led them to rid themselves of all but a

narrow range of strictly pictorial considerations. With its roots in hard edge abstraction the post-painterly abstractionists had very little time for the roots of abstract expressionism. One of the progenitors of the post-painterly was Josef Albers who had been closely connected with the Bauhaus in the 1920's. He was very interested in Gestalt psychology and this led him towards an exploration of the effects of optical illusion, and, later he was drawn towards a study of the ways in which colours act upon one another. Post-painterly abstraction developed from these hard-edged beginnings through, the painting as an object in itself, through a search for flatness, [Morris Louis being the expert, ill. 13. Air Desired 1959] to the stage when Ad Reinhardt wrote one of his many "*manifestoes*".

1. No texture. Texture is naturalistic or mechanical and is a vulgar quality.
2. No brushwork or calligraphy. Handwriting, handworking and handjerkings are personal and in poor taste.
3. No sketching or drawing. Everything, where to begin and where to end, should be worked out in the mind beforehand.
4. No forms, "the finest has no shape".
5. No design "design is everywhere".
6. No colours. "colour blinds". "colours are aspects of appearance and so only of the surface", and are, "a distancing embellishment". Colours are barbaric, unstable, suggest life, cannot be completely controlled", and, "should be concealed". No white.



ill. 13. AIR DESIRED.

"White is a colour". White is "antiseptic and not artistic, appropriate and pleasing for kitchen fixtures and hardly the medium for expressing truth and beauty." White on white is "a transition from pigment to light and a screen for the projection of light and moving pictures."

7. No light. No bright or direct light in or over the painting.

8. No space. Space should be empty, should not project and should not be flat. "The painting should be behind the picture frame." the frame should isolate and protect the picture from it's surroundings. Space division in the painting should not be seen.

9. No time. "Clock time or man's time is inconsequential." There is no ancient or modern, no past or future in art. A work of art is always present. The present is the future of the past, not the past of the future.

10. No size or scale. Breadth and depth of thought and feeling in art have no relation to physical size. Large sizes are aggressive, positivist, intemperate, venal and graceless.

11. No movement. "Everything is on the move, art should be still."

12. No object, no subject, no matter. No symbols, images or signs. Neither pleasure nor pain. No mindless working or mindless no-working. No chess-playing.

For a decade, post-painterly abstraction represented a kind of modernist orthodoxy - it occupied the kind of position in terms of intellectual that history painting en-

joyed in the eighteenth century. Because post-painterly abstraction seemed to bring the possibilities offered by pure painting to a kind of conclusion, artists who wished to find their way forward were inclined to abandon the idea of the painted canvas a vehicle for what they wanted to say.

So was post-painterly abstraction a mistake ?

From the point of view of painting it certainly painted a bleak future, and, as both Klee and Hesse could point out, post- painterly abstraction by it's very nature would be futile and dangerous. Futile and dangerous because it not only destroyed itself but also tried to bring all other forms of painting down with it. Any movement, with the intellectual prestige that post-painterly abstraction had, which then lionises about it being the true keeper of the flame, and, comes out with such heavy-handed statements as Ad Reinhardt's, is a very dangerous movement and is making a very big mistake. Even, if only for the fact that saying, that, the reality they find themselves in is true and others are not.

From another viewpoint post-painterly abstraction might not have been all that bad. The seeming demise of painting led to a swing towards mixed media, environments, performance, and other conceptual work. So the logical conclusion of post- painterly abstraction is conceptual art, because the results achieved are the only possible answers to such a narrowly defined intellectual field. The conscious, purely intellectual side of painting ends up in pure thought, because the canvas does not seem pliable enough, just as in physics when the means of measuring things, is not pliable enough, because distances are too great or things are too small. Therefore following the pure-

ly intellectual path seems to spell the death of painting. When the idea is the only essential component in a piece, painting seems incidental to the art. As Tom Wolfe wrote in *The Painted Word* :-

"The conceptualists liked to propound the following question: Suppose the greatest artists in the history of the world, impoverished and unknown at the time, had been sitting at a table at the old automat at Union Square, cadging some free water and hoping to cop a leftover crust of toasted corn muffin or a few abandoned translucent char-treuse waxed beans or some other item of that amazing range of yellow food the automat went in for - and suddenly he got the inspiration for the greatest work of art in the history of the world. Possessing not even as much as a pencil or a burnt match, he dipped his forefinger into the glass of water and began recording this greatest of all inspirations, this highpoint in the history of man as a sentient being, on a paper napkin, with New York tapwater as his paint. In a matter of seconds of course, the water had diffused through the paper and the grand design vanished, whereupon the greatest artist in the history of the world slumped to the table and died of a broken heart, and the manager came over, and he thought that he was nothing more than a dead wino with a wet napkin. Now the question is: would that have been the greatest work of art in the history in the world or not ?" ²

Taking the other side, the subconscious, following through to its logical conclusion we end up in the spiritual realm of pure being. In a state where there is thought and no thought. The spiritual search for truths in the subconscious, and the belief that the real truths can only be found in the subconscious, inevitable ends up in pure being. Painting can be used by some people to achieve pure being, but then when someone

reaches this state there is no point in painting. Painting becomes an insignificant trivial task, in what should be a realm of all knowing. Either way conscious or subconscious, if followed in isolation as an end in itself seems to cease needing painting.

"But we have had lots of different movements since the rise of conceptualism and minimalism !" Some people will cry, and in fact painting is alive and well, after all it is the age of pluralism. Back in 1981 Thomas Lawson wrote :-

*"They can dabble in pluralism, that last holdout of an exhausted modernism, choosing from an assortment of attractive labels - Narrative Art, Pattern and Decoration, New Image, New Wave, Naive Nouveau, Energism - the style most suited to their own self-referential purposes. Or more frankly engaged in exploiting the last manneristic twitches of modernism, they can resuscitate the idea of abstract painting. Or, taking a more critical stance, they can invest their faith in the subversive potential of those radical manifestations of modernist art labelled minimalism and conceptualism."*³

Since Lawson wrote his article "Last Exit Painting" we have entertained too many more "new" movements. Transavantgardism, New Figuration, and New Expressionism to name a few. When painting came up against the wall that was the end of post-painterly abstraction the way forward for painting seemed blocked: *"Problem ! You can't let painting die, after all, there is a whole market for it out there ! We can't look forward so let's look backwards. We'll use history for backup, after all painting dies out if you ignore history as the post-painterly abstractionists did. Put history back in and things will be grand again. Art the fashionable commodity now becomes even more fashionable, and the collection must be kept changing to satisfy the customers."* In doing this we

now have the art world spinning around in circles, and this month's flavour was last decade's flavour which was the flavour of two decades before. In this art world we have such "wonderful" new artists as Jeff Koons, Hein Steinbach and Sherrie Levine. Pop art was a rehashing of Dada and now Jeff Koons and Steinbach are rehashing Dada again. As Raoul Hausmann, wrote in referring to pop :-

*"Dada fell like a golden raindrop from heaven. The Neo-Dadists have learnt to imitate the fall, but not the raindrop."*⁴

Marcel Duchamp was more outspoken in a letter addressed to Hans Richter in 1962 :-

*"This Neo-Dada which they call new realism, pop art, assemblage etc. is an easy way out, and lives on what Dada did. When I discovered readymades I thought to discourage aesthetics. In Neo-Dada they have taken my readymades and found aesthetic beauty in them. I threw the bottle-rack and the urinal into their faces as a challenge and now they admire them for their aesthetic beauty."*⁵

Koons' work rehashes Duchamp's work, using it as a crutch to stand on, and Koons has people supporting his work who have the audacity to claim that Koons' work is somewhat better than Duchamp's :-

*"As examples of art undermining its own status, Koons' early pieces directly recall Duchamp's readymades; but as art objects charged with contemporary task of meaning in context, their presence becomes even more loaded than that of their 1914 predecessors."*⁶

Koons' justification for his pieces, such as his six-car steam locomotive liquor decanter, is his meaning in context, in this case the piece *"emphasises American's obsession with mobility, tied in with a recognition of alcohol abuse"* and is meant to be *"necessary means to communicate with"*.⁷ Koons might think he is being clever but he is only playing into the hands of those very executives he is showing up.

If this continual spinning of the art world continues, it could not only spell an end for painting but also bring the whole "Castalia" of the art world to the ground. The really good art, that usually stays on the periphery of the art world, would be taken with the fashion art, because, the lack of trust for the peripheral art that exists now would really be enforced, because the art that pandered to the market, that art which people trusted, has now been proven worthless. As these movements come around again and again the time in between them will get lesser and lesser, as people each time realise they have seen it all before Soon things will get to the Christmas syndrome - Oh, is it that time of year again !

None of these movements have been truly avant-garde since the beginning of conceptualism because conceptualism was the one movement that got closest to pure thought which will be the forefront of all that necessitates the use of truly imaginative and creative thought. Applying the lesson, that both Klee and Hesse learned of not following a singular path of investigation, and, somehow getting the art world back on tracks, by showing the fashion artists and the peripheral artists their mistakes. It is just as misleading to allow the conceptualists to continue on lionising as the true guardians of the faith, and not let them realise the futility of their purely intellectual pursuits.

*"From a position of high moral superiority these elitists of another sort, intellectual but anti-aesthetic, condemn the practise of 'incorrect' art altogether, as an irredeemably bourgeois activity that remains largely beneath their notice. Both approaches of the aesthete and the moralist, leave distinction blurred, and art itself is conveniently relegated to an insignificant position as background material serving only to peg the display of self or theory. From both sides we receive the same hopeless message: that there is no point in continuing to make art since it can only exist insulated from the real world or as an irresponsible bauble."*⁸

The development of conceptual art opened the traditional boundaries of art up to areas that were previously unthought of. But the post-modernist era along with the intellectual elitism of the conceptualists did all they could, maybe unknown to themselves, to close those boundaries again. The post-modernists by hogging centre-stage, and loving every minute of it, and the conceptualists, with their intellectual high-handedness and staying on the peripheries of the market. Art made on the peripheries of the market remains marginal. Another example of the futility of any spiritual realm divorced wholly from contemporary social reality.

So where do we go from here ?

The state of affairs of the art world must be recognised, before the lack of faith in the abilities of artists, to be any more than plagiaristic stylists destroys the interest in art. Be it in physics, art or any other field that uses creative imaginative thinking, the future lies in pure thought. Taking pure thought as the forefront of art and the fact that, if you end up at pure thought, whether you progress down either path, you are faced with

the problem that, either way painting or whatever medium you use, has become obsolete. This coupled with a lack of faith in those other artists who have spent their time propping up the cliched corpse of pluralism, makes the future for painting very obscure and the cry "*painting is dead*" seem all the more accurate. Fortunately there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The progression to pure thought, which seems to be a nail in the coffin of painting, is in fact, what could be the beginning of a fantastic new age of art, for which painting would be an essential medium.

Pure thought takes over when the means at a person's disposal are no longer able to stand up to the rigours of that person's investigations. Pure thought takes over in physics when the distances and sizes have gotten either too great or too small for any of the existing scales to be applicable or else when we are incapable of access to other worlds that we know exist :-

"There is an idea - strange, haunting, evocative - one of the most exquisite conjectures in science or religion. It is entirely undemonstrated; it may never be proved. But it stirs the blood. There is, we are told, an infinite hierarchy of universes, so that an elementary particle such as an electron in our universe would, if penetrated, reveal itself to be an entire closed universe. Within it, organised into the local equivalent of galaxies and smaller structures are an immense number of other, much tinier elementary particles, which are themselves universes at the next level and so on forever - an infinite downward regression, universes within universes, endlessly. And upward as well. Our familiar universe of galaxies and stars, planets and people, would be a single elementary particle in the next universe up, the first step of another infinite regress.

*This is the only religious idea I know that surpasses the endless number of infinitely old cycling universes in Hindu cosmology. What would those other universes be like ? Would they be built on different laws of physics ? Would they have stars and galaxies and worlds, or something quite different. Might they be compatible with some unimaginably different form of life ? To enter them, we would somehow have to penetrate a fourth physical dimension - not an easy undertaking, surely, but perhaps a black hole would provide a way. There may be small black holes in the solar neighbourhood. Poised at the edge of forever, we would jump off ... "*⁹

*"The riddles of the subatomic particles - of the electrons and the rest - are mental riddles."*¹⁰

Writing about the argument and speculation that the puzzles that the electron was setting, Bronowski said that it requires :-

*"not calculation, but insight, imagination if you like metaphysics"*¹¹

We use our knowledge of the laws and theories of science to imagine these worlds and to try to answer questions posed by them. Pure thought is an investigation of the outer limits of our imaginations and our existence. It is the outer limits of our search for truths and therefore the outer limits of art. The problem though with pure thought is that we need something to stop it from becoming an elitist intellectual field. This is where painting, and, the realisation of the futility of a singular intellectual path isolated from social reality, comes into play. The act of painting to pass on thoughts and dreams arrived at through pure thought is one way of keeping in touch with reality. With

this in mind the artist becomes a communicator instead of an elitist once again. As with Fritz Tegularius, in The Glass Bead Game there is no point in being a brilliant scholar if you are totally unfit for any position of responsibility. Realising this then, in the realm of pure thought, artists should try and advance, always trying to attain the correct balance between emotional and intellectual and realise that there are truths to be found in the conscious and the subconscious, and marry this with the spark of inspiration that makes an artist want to communicate things.

With pure thought the boundaries are limitless Shifts in awareness would come so rapidly, the exhilaration would cause a culture to become giddy with the prospects of new accomplishments, hardly describable in known terms. As Thomas McEvily wrote about the dawn of conceptual and performance art :-

*"At such moments the boundaries of things seem outworn; the contents flow into and around one another dizzying. In a realm that, like art some twenty-five years ago, feels it's inherited boundaries to be antiquated and ineffective, a sudden overflow in all directions can occur."*¹²

To try to describe and communicate the findings after these shifts in awareness we need a highly pliable medium and a willingness to manipulate linguistic categories at will. As in physics with accomplishments hardly describable in known terms a new language will have to be developed. A new language cannot just appear all of a sudden. It will be developed out of, or from reactions to existing languages. To try and ignore existing languages would be very foolish, because there is so much scope for development from them. Many different media can be elevated to beyond their exist-

ing levels, as Klee did with caricature and other media. Caricature is one of the most important sources of Klee's art, and he directed all his intellectual and creative talent toward shaping it's compositional principles into a style of his own. Klee's form of pictorial thinking could not have been achieved without the particular combination of visual and linguistic elements caricature encompassed, image and caption. As a further attraction caricature was an altogether unacademic genre, the special quality of which lay in the experimentation it allowed with markedly individual styles of drawing. Klee raised caricature to a broader, higher level of artistic expression by freeing it from it's bondage to a momentary theme and by giving limitless extension to it's pictorial possibilities.

It is in this situation that the body of work which Klee left us, is of great interest and of great value to us today. The potential for development from Klee's work seems limitless, and the capabilities of his work have already been exploited to a fantastic extent. As John Russell wrote :-

*"The unemphatic art of Paul Klee has entered the universal language not only of fine art but of advertising, graphic design, high-quality cartooning and communications in general. Short of hiding under the sofa, it would be difficult to pass a day in a big city anywhere in the Western world and not be reminded of Paul Klee over and over again."*¹³

It is now time to stand back and reassess our situation and realise that it is from this chaos that a new order will come. It is easy when we come to an impasse, to shout the world is going to end, I knew they were wrong anyway or that painting is dead !

People like these have been proven wrong time and time again by the truly imaginative and creative people of the world. The people who dream and then make their dream come true. The engineer Stephenson was told that if he travelled at more than 30 m.p.h., the oxygen would be sucked out of his lungs, by people who knew better than he. Needless to say Stephenson and his rocket survived the experience.

"Each system of organising knowledge develops partly in terms of, and in response to a specific set of problems, that could not be solved by the previous organisation." The Renaissance organisation of knowledge originated from one such impasse.

"The Renaissance organisation developed in part because it became absolutely necessary to solve the problems of learning, to deal effectively with the environment after the Black Death. The Black Death had killed more than one fourth of the population of Europe and the medieval perception of the world was completely ineffective in doing anything about it. Every technique of the previous organisation of knowledge was used in the attempts to control the plague - prayer, ecstatic mysticism, scapegoating, medicine based on sympathetic magic and so forth. All failed. Under the pressure of a critical problem that it cannot solve with its present conception and organisation of reality, a culture either develops a new one or goes under. Under the pressure of its critical problems Western Europe developed a new way of organising reality, a way that made it possible to study and control the outside environment it defined." ¹⁴

To say that painting is dead is like someone just after the Black Death, saying that humanity will expire in a few years. Look what happened to us ! Painting might

seem to be dying but, no, I believe that it is going to be one of the most important media in a new age of art.

" F O O T N O T E S "

¹ Herman Hesse, The Glass Bead Game, p.IX of foreword by T. Ziolkowski.

² Tom Wolfe, The Painted Word.

³ Thomas Lawson, "Last Exit Painting", Artforum October 1981

also Richard Hertz, Theories of Contemporary Art, p.144.

⁴ Raoul Hausmann, - one of the original Dadaists.

Edward Lucie-Smith, Movements in Art Since 1945, p.11.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Dan Cameron, Art and it's Double, p24.

⁷ Ibid, p.36.

⁸ Thomas Lawson, "Last Exit Painting", Artforum October 1981

also Richard Hertz, Theories of Contemporary Art, p.155.

⁹ Carl Sagan, Cosmos, p.265.

¹⁰ J. Bronowski, The Ascent of Man, p.362.

¹¹ Ibid, p.364.

¹² Thomas McEvilley, "Art in the Dark", Artforum

also Richard Hertz, Theories of Contemporary Art", p.288.

¹³ John Russell, Times [New York].

¹⁴ Lawrence Leshan, Einstein's Space and VanGogh's Sky, p.31.

C O N C L U S I O N

In a world, such as the art world, it is very easy to become lost in elitist pursuits. To go off on a tangent, to go on a fantastic journey through the realms of imagination, on and on developing a world of what some people would call fantasy, which becomes futile in the face of social realities. Likewise a singular journey that keeps its feet firmly in social reality is futile. Any singular path of discovery will eventually prove to be both futile and dangerous. Balances must be achieved between these different realities for art to continue as a useful form of communication. The more realities that a person is exposed to, the better that person becomes able to deal with the various obstacles that appear throughout life. A person, who is used to being able to deal with many different realities that life faces us with, will be able to deal with the realm of pure thought, far better than a person who is lost in investigation down a singular path. Now that art is passing into the realm of pure thought, we need artists who are open to a many different realities as possible not artists who shut off history, science, etc. in their search for their purely intellectual goals. Nor artists who undermine the system by pandering to it, while they claim they are doing the opposite. We need artists who are prepared to exploit and manipulate mediums to an extent that has been unthought of before. Art is on the verge of a new age and Paul Klee's art, that has made him a central figure in the art of the twentieth century and still very much alive today, can be used as a cornerstone for a new language. A new language capable of dealing with the realities of pure thought. We shall have to wait and see if Paul Klee's work is timeless.

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