

# 4 Paul Klee

## Outsider and Marginalised Artist Workshop Pack



Paul Klee, *Bewölkung (Clouds)*, 1926, © DACS  
Pallant House Gallery - Kearley Bequest (1989)



# Paul Klee (1879-1940)

Paul Klee was born in Switzerland in 1879. His German father and Swiss mother were both musical and encouraged their son to become a musician. At the age of nineteen, although he was a talented violin player, Klee decided to go to Munich and study Fine Art, against the wishes of his parents.

In 1906 he married a pianist, Lily Stumpf, who shared his interest in music, and they settled in Munich where their son, Felix, was born a year later. Klee became involved with 'Der Blaue Reiter' (the Blue Rider) group of artists, having met Kandinsky and Franz Marc. The first exhibition for the group was held in Munich and included the self-taught artist Henri Rousseau. A second exhibition was arranged a year later, in 1912, and this time it included Klee's work.

Klee was committed to encouraging and promoting the art of 'outsiders', in particular self-taught individuals who create work outside the conventions of the art world. In addition Klee was an influential artist inspired by 'outsider' art who endeavoured to bring, through his work, 'outsider' artists into the mainstream of 20<sup>th</sup> century culture. Throughout his life Klee was a keen and accomplished writer and, reflecting on the Blaue Reiter exhibitions, he wrote in his diary:

*Parallel phenomena are provided by the works of the mentally disturbed...  
...All this is to be taken very seriously, more seriously than all the public galleries, when it comes to reforming today's art.*

The experience of travelling to Italy, France, North Africa and the Middle East inspired Klee to transform his mainly drawing based, monochromatic work and to experiment with painting and colour. He was an inventive and prolific artist and the work he produced covered a wide range of media including etching, lithography, watercolour, oil paint, spray paint, gouache, pen and ink. He painted and drew on panes of glass, creating monoprints and mixed media work on paper.



Paul Klee, *Belastete Kinder* (*Burdened Children*), 1930  
© DACS



Photographer unknown, *Portrait of Paul Klee*  
© DACS



Else Blankenhorn, *Banknote*, 1891  
© The Prinzhorn Collection



## Ways of working for a monoprint

- Select either an image by the artist or a suitable image you have found.
- You will need a flat, smooth and washable board made from Perspex or plastic (e.g. a white chopping board), a small printing roller and a tube of water-based printing ink.
- Squeeze a small amount of ink onto the board and roll out so that a thin, smooth layer of ink covers the surface, leaving a clean margin around the edges.
- Place a clean sheet of paper over the ink and secure it with masking tape on the corners to prevent movement while you are drawing.
- Working from your chosen image draw the design with a pencil or biro onto the paper. The design will print out as a mirror image so, when drawing, be aware that any text will read back to front after printing.
- When you have finished your drawing remove the tape and peel back the paper.
- Allow the ink to dry and, if required, add colour with crayons or pastels.





## Step Up!

Step Up Is an innovative project funded through Renaissance and Surrey, East and West Sussex Museums Development Service. It is both a training opportunity for marginalised and outsider artists to lead workshops and a dedicated piece of research in to the collections at Pallant House Gallery in to the lives, stories, impact and work of outsider and marginalised artists. Motif produced as part of Step Up workshops.



Johann Knopf (Knüpfer), *Big Bumperton on the Sabbath* (*Der Große Bumperton am Sabath*), n.d. © The Prinzhorn Collection