

DAS UNIVERSUM KLEE

31.10.08 –
08.02.09

NEUE
NATIONALGALERIE
BERLIN

PRESS RELEASE 1

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For a period of 4 months, the exhibition *The Klee Universe* will be bringing together 250 works on loan from around the world, uniting them in a major thematic retrospective in the Neue Nationalgalerie.

Berlin. Exactly 85 years after the first ever Klee exhibition was held by the Nationalgalerie, the Neue Nationalgalerie now proudly presents a major retrospective of Klee's work, entitled *The Klee Universe*, running from 31 October to 8 February 2009.

The exhibition takes visitors on a grand journey through Klee's universe and, over the course of fifteen separate thematic sections, gives them the chance to experience at first hand the pictorial cosmos of Paul Klee – one of most important artists of the early 20th century. The human life cycle, from birth to death, forms the beginning and end of the exhibition. Between these two poles of existence come childhood, Eros and the role of parents as well as various other states of being such as war and sickness. Theatre and music, architecture and writing all serve to highlight the many various facets of the cultural life of the individual. The world of animals and nature broadens the perspective on earthly forms of existence, while excursions to distant lands stake out the geographical expanse of the globe. Each chapter to the exhibition profiles Klee's work chronologically and allows specific aspects of his biography to come to light.

The exhibition will be held on the lower floor of the Neue Nationalgalerie, whose architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, himself once collected works by Klee. A key room in the exhibition posits Klee in his relation to nine other artists who served as points of reference for him in the development of his career and the way he saw himself as an artist, among them: Robert Delaunay, Franz Marc, Wassily Kandinsky and Pablo Picasso. This brief thematic digression in the exhibition enhances *The Klee Universe* by imbuing it with an aspect which has never been presented in such a context before. The exhibition is dedicated to the memory of the great Klee collector, Heinz Berggruen, who followed the preparations with great enthusiasm right up until his death in 2007.

The Klee Universe is an exhibition put on by the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and forms part of the festival of exhibitions being held on the *Cult of the Artist*. The exhibition also serves as a suitable high note for Peter-Klaus Schuster to bid farewell as Director of the Nationalgalerie. *The Klee Universe* has been made possible by the Verein der Freunde der Nationalgalerie, which bears sole responsibility for funding and organizing the exhibition. The project was fortunate enough to win the support of E.ON AG as its main sponsor. The media partners which have helped make the exhibition known to a wider public outside of Berlin are: *Die Welt*, RBB Fernsehen and RBB Kulturradio.

Over 700 guided tours for groups have already been sold in advance. In addition to the tours and the diverse programme of events that accompanies the exhibition, visitors will once again be able to enjoy the added benefit of having *ciceroni* or 'LIVE!SPEAKER' helpers in the exhibition. The task of the young art history students involved will be to answer any questions visitors may have and to offer summary explanations of the works and themes in the exhibition.

For further information, please go to: www.kleeinberlin.org where you can also find images to download in the section reserved for press use only.

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