tiny sailor battling sea monsters, heads that float, mysterious cityscapes, fantasti-
c under water worlds—all scenes that existed in the mind of artist Paul Klee
clay). Klee considered the creative act a magical experience, one in which
the creator discovers a deeper reality hidden beneath the surface. And with just a few
strokes, Klee is able to take the viewer into his own unique universe.

At the beginning of the 20th century, many changes were taking place, and these
rapid changes were influencing the way artists worked. The development of photography
meant there was little need for traditional realism. Reacting to the great advances
being made in technology, as well as the destruction caused by
World War I (1914–1918), many artists of the time rebelled
against conventional ways of thinking. They turned inward,
basing their art on memories, feelings, and dreams.

Born in Switzerland in 1879, Paul Klee grew up in a musical
family. In high school he had many interests. Klee couldn't
decide whether to be a musician, a writer, a mathematician,
or an artist, finally choosing to study art in Germany. Klee's
early works, such as Menacing Head (above, right), were black
and white etchings and drawings, featuring grotesque subjects
done with detailed, fine lines. In 1901, Klee visited Italy, and
became interested in Byzantine mosaics.

Just before World War I began, Klee had an experience
that changed his life and his art. He visited North Africa, and
began working with watercolor. The fantastic landscapes, the
bright light, and the intense color inspired the artist to write
in his diary, “My experiences overwhelm me... I and color
are one. I am a painter.” Contrast Menacing Head with Klee's
1922 watercolor (top, far right). Set in a glowing,
backdrop, a huge purple-nosed head dances to the music
of a tiny pianist. The scratchy, childlike lines and the title,
Dance Monster, to My Soft Song, emphasize the painting’s
mysterious, perhaps somewhat sinister, meaning.

About this time, Klee began experimenting with
mosaic-like effects, building paintings with glowing, colored
squares. The Sower (right) is made up of repeated, geometric
blue rectangles set at an angle. The light, flat, organic
curved) figures stand out against the dark ocean. The spear
and blood suggest a fierce battle, but the simplified, stylized,
optimized outcomes have the lightness and humor of cartoons.

The cartoon-like quality of this work (right) may be due to
the fact that it was created to illustrate a comic opera.
Voyages

"This “menacing head” bears the features of its creator, Paul Klee. Is the creature in his hair real, or a product of the artist’s imagination?"

"Titles are a vital part of Klee’s works. Does this work have more meaning when you know it is called Dance Monster, to My Soft Song?"

Many of Paul Klee's paintings have the directness of children's book illustrations, with their simplified lines, scale changes, and abstracted shapes. And that is the feeling the artist was trying to capture. Klee wanted to go beneath surface appearances; to express the deeper reality that comes from the imagination. To do this, he needed "to start over as though newborn, letting the pencil go by itself." He felt that by following the line he could uncover "the reality of the unseen experience."

Landscape With Yellow Birds (above left) is a fantastic combination of jungle vines (the four large white shapes), desert cacti, underwater plants, and northern pine trees. In this work, Klee contrasts the cosmic with the microscopic. The scene includes a white sun, a moon, and clouds, as well as dots of moss, pine needles, and veins in leaves. The flat, yellow birds are seen right side up and upside down, like the pattern on an Oriental rug. For some reason, a tiny bird at the bottom digs frantically, trying to get between two trees. Nearly every shape has a thin, white outline around it, giving the scene a magical, jewellike quality.

In a Klee painting, line usually establishes the action, while color creates the mood. In Error on Green (above, center), a few curved and straight lines of varying widths describe a moonfaced character set in a green background. Most of the lines are thin and geometric, and the low-intensity colors create a melancholy mood. As in many of Klee's works, this painting contains more questions than answers. The two curved lines that make up the figure's eyebrows and nose leave the frame, like antennae.
Two rectangles and a black tear hang from one eyebrow. A yellow table with a leg on it becomes a bent ladder. A crescent moon appears in the left eye, a sun with rays in the right. What does the title mean? Was there an error in communication? Did it last a day, or a month? Could this work be an apology for a mistake made by the artist?

Sometimes in looking at a complex Klee painting, we have to start with the title. Does Ad Parnassum (above) make more sense when you know that in ancient Greek mythology, Mount Parnassus was the home of goddesses (called muses) who inspired artists? This mosaiclike image—a mountain with a temple at the bottom—was created by the repetition of thousands of small color rectangles and the addition of a few thick, black lines. For centuries, Parnassus has symbolized creativity, and Klee wanted to capture this sense of timelessness in his painting. To do this, he began with parallel ink lines, then filled the areas between the lines with dark color washes. Finally, he painted row after horizontal row of bright color dots. The black outlines set off the color, giving the painting a magical, shimmering effect. The artist wanted the viewer to experience light changing over time. The narrow triangle above the orange sun represents dawn; the long, white shape above the arch stands for noon.

Underwater life fascinated Klee. Fish Magic (pages 8–9) is a fantasy world containing flowers, plants, figures, suns, moons, and swimming fish. In this work, Klee's imagery is as mysterious as ever. A clock in a small tentlike shape is being lowered into a ghostly aquarium in the center of the picture. Klee has scratched out the images from the thickly painted background, using lines, dots, scribbles, and cross-hatchings. These positive lines stand out against the dark negative background area, giving everything a mystical glow.

Some of Klee's paintings, such as this one, deal with the passage of time.

The truth you are looking for lies hidden at the bottom of things," said Paul Klee. And as his search for the truth continued, Klee eliminated more and more from his paintings. Finally, he was able to express everything he wanted to with just a few simple lines.

In 1921, Klee began teaching at the Bauhaus (bough-house), Germany's most important design school. And many of the symbols he drew on the blackboard to help explain his ideas began making their way into his work. Arrows, graphs, charts, and grids form the basis of Mural From the Temple of Longing (above). In this work, Klee is perhaps using geometric lines, opposing arrows, shadowlike shapes, concentric circles, and warm, yellowish colors to express a very basic feeling—the confusion of being lost in a big city on a hot summer's day.

In his desire to visually communicate the invisible reality behind visible things, Klee even put sounds on paper. In Howling Dog (right), the artist uses a single scratchy, continuous line to create three distinct forms—a dog (on the right), the moon, and the dog's howl. The shapes are tied together by the sound that flows from the dog's mouth, winding around on itself, broken only by sharp barks.

One of Klee's last paintings, done two years before his death in 1940, is Park Near Lucerne (right). Klee's works, no matter how non-representational they may seem, are almost always based on some aspect of nature.

Made up of thick, black lines and patches of solid color, this flat, abstract image represents an ordinary city park. Can you make out the flowering trees and bushes? The concentric circles stand for growth and natural cycles. The new buds are made to look even more fragile by the artist's use of a thin, white line between the flowers and the branches. The sharp edges of the shapes suggest clipped, ordered plants in a park, while a bit of green lawn can be seen through the trees. For all its simplicity and abstractness, this work seems to capture feelings inspired by the rebirth of spring.

A number of short, thick lines (right) suggest clipped trees and hedges.

In this work (left), Klee uses a single, thin continuous line to capture sound.
FISH MAGIC
BY PAUL KLEE

"Art does not reproduce what we see. It makes us see."—PAUL KLEE
BRINGING LINES TO LIFE

Three modern artists who have used line in very different ways.

"THERE'S NOTHING I HAVEN'T SUFFERED TO SEE THINGS FIRSTHAND."—JOSEPH YOAKUM

LINEAR LANDSCAPES

African-American artist Joseph Yoakum (YOKE-um) did not actually become an artist until he was 76. He was born on a Navajo reservation in Arizona and grew up on a Missouri farm. In his youth, Yoakum concentrated on seeing the world. He ran away with a traveling circus and toured with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Sometimes he worked as a railroad porter or stowed away on merchant ships. During World War I, Yoakum joined the U.S. Army and served in France.

Yoakum finally settled down, married, and fathered five children.

In 1962, Yoakum dreamed that he had been "instructed by the Lord" to begin drawing. Using ballpoint or felt-tipped pens, Yoakum created stylized images of faraway places. He filled in the heavy outlines with watercolor or colored pencils. With an atlas, the Bible, and his own travels for inspiration, Yoakum gave his drawings elaborate titles. In Mt. Corregio; in Huerzo Providence near Mexico City Mexico (above), he used strong, curving lines and muted colors to create a dreamlike landscape filled with rolling hills and mountains. Yoakum called his drawings a "spiritual unfoldment." Until his death in 1972, he completed almost a drawing a day. Yoakum's drawings have been exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.
“THE BLACK PERSON IS THE PROTAGONIST IN MOST OF MY PAINTINGS.”—JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT

URBAN SCRAWL

Within a few years, Jean-Michel Basquiat (BASS-ki-at) went from spray-painting graffiti slogans around Lower Manhattan to international “art stardom.” Art collectors were fascinated by Basquiat’s edgy images, with their text references to pop culture, racism, art history, jazz, and hip-hop. In Untitled (Skull) (left), Basquiat uses jagged, spiky lines to create an abstract image that provides a window into the subject’s psyche. Dark colors and cross-hatching create a troubled, restless mood.

Basquiat, the son of a Haitian father and a Puerto Rican mother, grew up in Brooklyn, New York. He had no formal art training, although his mother took him to museums and bought him art books. Basquiat loved to draw, but had little patience with school. He eventually dropped out, ran away from home, and sometimes slept in city parks. The first time he exhibited his art, gallery owners took an interest in him. Soon, Basquiat’s paintings were selling for thousands of dollars. But sudden fame proved difficult for the artist, who died from a drug overdose at the age of 27.

“A FOR ME, NATURE IS NOT LANDSCAPE BUT THE DYNAMISM OF VISUAL FORCES.”—BRIDGET RILEY

MOVING LINES

What happens when you stare at Shh-li (below)? The longer you look at the image, the more it appears to vibrate and shimmer. Some areas of the composition appear to lift up or warp, creating a 3-D effect. Your eyes may become so “overloaded” that you need to look away for a moment. This painting—created by British artist Bridget Riley—is an example of Op Art, which uses visual effects to make our eyes play tricks on us. These optical illusions cause us to see movements, flashes, flickers—even colors—that are not really there. Riley was inspired not only by the abstract art of Paul Klee but also by a black-and-white tile pavement she saw while visiting Italy. Caught in a downpour, the artist noticed how the checkerboard pattern appeared to shift and blur as the rain washed over it.

In the late 1950s, Riley began painting Op Art images using only black and white. They contained repeated lines, squares, or concentric circles that appeared to shift, bulge, or pulsate. Riley later used color to enhance the optical effects in her paintings. In Shh-li, repeating, wavy lines create a steady undulating (wavelike) motion. The contrasting colors of red and blue placed side by side enhance the shimmering effect.


Creating A Color

Michelle Li rarely struggles when she creates a work of art. The 14-year-old student—currently in the eighth grade at Spring Branch Middle School in Houston, Texas—says drawing and painting seem to come naturally to her. “I don’t think about whether the picture will be good or bad. I just make what I feel,” Li says.

An emigrant from Chengdu, China, who moved to Houston four years ago, Li sometimes even surprises herself at what she is able to create with such a relaxed attitude. A good example is this painting (right) with its array of different lines and patterns. “With art, you can just go crazy and be creative,” Li says. “That’s why I love making art. It’s so much fun.”

How did you first get involved with art?

I’ve been drawing ever since I was in kindergarten. I always loved to sit by myself and draw cartoons and the animated characters I saw on TV. I came to the United States and took my first art class in sixth grade because I wanted to learn as much as I could about drawing and technique.

How did you come to do this award-winning piece?

It was an assignment for my seventh-grade art class. At the time, we were learning about patterns and working with different kinds of lines. The teacher gave us a piece of construction paper and told us to draw a person’s face. We had to use a pencil to sketch the outline of the eyes, eyebrows, nose, and mouth. Next we were to use paint to trace over the pencil outline. Then we had to work with Sharpie markers to make patterns.

When you drew this face, were you thinking of anyone in particular?

No, but I think the subject is a man because the eyes don’t have eyelashes. For me, that means it’s a man. I think he’s middle aged or old, because of the wrinkles he’s got on his forehead, under his eyes, and around his mouth and chin. Also, he’s not smiling. He might be thinking about something.

What’s the title of your work?

It’s called The Exaggerated Face. It looks really abstract. It doesn’t look at all realistic, that’s why I gave it that title. The colors and patterns make everything on the face seem more pronounced than they really are.

How did you come up with all of the lines and patterns that you did?

Before we got started, my teacher drew a face for us as an example of what he was looking for. He also gave us a white sheet of paper and had us draw as many different lines and patterns that we could think of as a warm-up exercise. I got some ideas from him, and then I was able to come up with some of my own.

How did you work with line in this piece?

My goal was to make the face as interesting as I could. To do that, I worked with as many different kinds of lines as I could dream up—straight, wavy, zigzags, circles, shields, spikes, coils—to accentuate the man’s eyes, nose, and lips. I tried to make the lines look like they were rotating or zigzagging, to give the piece energy. Then I mixed up the direction of my lines and patterns so the whole face would look more interesting. At the same time, I was striving for some sense of symmetry. I didn’t want the left side to look totally different from the right one, or else the face would be too weird and unrealistic. I tried to repeat patterns with variation.

“I worked with as many different kinds of lines as I could dream up—straight, wavy, zigzags, circles, shields, spikes, coils—to accentuate the man’s eyes, nose, and lips. I tried to make the lines look like they were rotating or zigzagging, to give the piece energy.”

Michelle Li
How did you create this piece?
First, purple is my favorite color, so that's the color of the construction paper I chose for the background. Next, I sketched the outline of the face. After I was satisfied with the composition, I started to work with paint. I took a brush and painted over the pencil lines with thick strokes of different colors. When the paint dried, I took a Sharpie and added more lines, patterns, and shapes to the painted lines. After I finished the face, I stood back and looked at it again. I felt something was missing, so I used Q-Tips™ to add more dots. I made sure the colors of the dots contrasted with the colors of the painted lines, for more variety.

What was the biggest challenge for you when you were creating this piece?
It was hard to come up with so many different lines and patterns. The teacher's model and warm-up exercise were really helpful in getting started. He encouraged us to be creative, to make all the patterns and shapes flow from one another.

What advice do you have for aspiring artists like yourself?
Don't think about whether the picture will come out well or badly. Don't stop yourself if you think you've made a mistake. Just draw what you feel, and try to be creative. That's how I usually work. A friend in my class was working on a piece and stopped herself, because she thought it looked really stupid. She started over. I thought what she had done looked terrible. If I had been her, I would have added something else to make it look better. I would have kept on working with it until I found the shape or look I wanted. You never know, a mistake could end up making a piece look even better.
Heldi has used a minimum of light, straight, even lines to divide her portrait into large, relatively equal areas. The related color scheme (red, orange, purple) indicates a calm, even temperament.

In Katie's painting the network of dark crossing lines, varying in width, suggests an older subject. The model's profile fills nearly the whole frame, giving the subject an air of authority. The face is made up of many graduated color shapes, indicating a complex personality.

Charles has used the intersecting diagonals of his subject's hair and background to suggest some kind of conflict. Her profile is nearly hidden, while cool shades of blue, green, and brown express a darker mood.

SCHOLASTIC ART WORKSHOP

ABSTRACTING A FACE

Use some of Paul Klee's methods to create an abstract profile

Paul Klee abstracted (simplified and stylized) natural objects to uncover "underlying forces that lie beneath the surface of the visible world." In Klee's works, line describes the action while color sets the mood.

In this workshop, you'll use line, shape, and one of Klee's favorite mediums—watercolor—to turn the face of a classmate into an abstract composition that expresses an "underlying" aspect of his or her personality.

**Step 1**

Each student will draw the student sitting across the table in profile. Then, the process will be reversed. The "model" will sit so that the "artist" can draw a side view of his or her head and shoulders. Begin by using a pen to draw one 15-minute blind contour drawing, then three 30-minute contour drawings. Use lines to abstract the face by dividing its surface.

**Materials**

- 9 x 12 in. 80 lb. white sulfite drawing paper
- Black liquid waterproof ink or black ballpoint pen, medium point
- 12 in. ruler
- Drawing board
- 8 or 16 pan semi-soft watercolors
- Variety of round, soft brushes
- Palette to mix paint (dinner plate)
- Container to hold water for rinsing brushes
- Saran Wrap
- Paper toweling

Set up your desks so that you are able to draw a profile view of another student. Use your ruler to divide the model's face into abstract, geometric shapes.
The active, diagonal lines of John's profile stand out against the passive horizontal of the background. The cool greens and blues in back also contrast with the figure's warm oranges and reds, implying an offbeat or unconventional nature.

The yellow and orange tints, simplified shapes, and thin, even lines in Shanna's portrait indicate a warm, outgoing subject. The artist has set her model against contrasting shades of purple, hinting at some sort of background tension.

into large, angled shapes. Divide the background into geometric shapes that contrast and/or relate to the lines and shapes in the figure. Work with a ruler and pen to interpret the figure using short lines and angles. DO NOT USE ANY LINES SHORTER THAN 1/4 INCH. Emphasize patterns found in hair and clothes. (Be careful to avoid smearing resulting from dragging the ruler over any wet ink lines.) Select the best drawing to use as the basis for the watercolor.

**Step 2**
Select the color scheme that will express the mood you wish to create. Limit your colors, and try to avoid bright hues. **Opposite** colors (red/green; blue/orange; yellow/purple) tend to indicate conflict or tension. **Related** colors (red, yellow, orange or blue, green, purple) are usually harmonious. Reds, yellows, and oranges are warm colors; blues, greens, and purples are cool. Light tones (tints) are more optimistic and happy; dark colors (shades) are more serious. Practice mixing color, making flat washes that go from light to dark; using whole brush pressed down for wide lines, tip for thin lines; absorbing color with damp brush or towel; and overpainting. **Remember never to overload your brush with paint or to paint next to an area that is still wet or damp.**

**Step 3**
Begin painting. Paint in stages. Work from light to dark, do large areas first and only when they are dry, overpaint detail. **Remember to keep watercolor away from black pen lines. Avoid bright colors. You can mix in black, white, or the opposite color to dull a color. Do not use watercolor straight from the pan. Mix enough color to cover entire area to be painted; it is difficult to match mixed colors. Save mixed color; cover with Saran Wrap; do not discard until painting is completed.**

Select your color scheme according to the mood and personality traits you wish to emphasize. Remember to always keep watercolor well away from any black pen lines.
Although most of Paul Klee’s works are highly abstracted, his subjects are usually taken directly from nature. Line was one of the artist’s most important tools, and he used it in an endless variety of ways.

Below are details of some of the works featured in this issue, and a list of linear techniques, subjects, and names. Next to each of these words, write the letter of the visual (or visuals) that seems most appropriate.

1. Thin, white outline  
2. Op Art  
3. Negative background  
4. Dancing monster  
5. Repeating, wavy lines  
6. Graffiti  
7. Concentric circles  
8. Paul Klee  
9. One continuous line  
10. Rows of dots  
11. Fine, detailed lines  
12. Cross-hatching  
13. Thick, black lines  
14. Jean-Michel Basquiat  
15. Jungle vine  
16. Scratchy lines  
17. Howling dog  
18. Trees in a park  
19. Positive lines  
20. Bridget Riley  
21. Temple  
22. Arrows, graphs, charts  
23. Etching  
24. City  
25. Self-portrait  
26. Optical illusion  
27. Noon