

### **John Sallis, *Senses of Landscape and Klee's Mirror* (2015)**

During 2015, John Sallis published two books that were both meditations on works of fine art and on the disclosive capacity of which fine art is capable.

In *Klee's Mirror* Sallis takes up the task of reflecting on Klee's dictum that "art does not represent the visible but makes visible." Studying Klee from intellectual and biographical perspectives, Sallis is able to provide a deft account not only of the work that Klee was doing with his art but, rather, the subterranean work that is always at play when we encounter the work of Art. Winding between Klee's art and theoretical writing gives Sallis the room to engage in a brilliant style of writing that challenges widely held distinctions between perception and the intellect.

*Klee's Mirror* is complimented later that year by the publication of *Senses of Landscape*. In *Senses of Landscape*, Sallis examines the landscapes of Paul Cezanne, Caspar David Friedrich, Paul Klee, and Guo Xi in the light of these artists' own writings about art in general and landscape painting in particular. From the fertile ground of this juncture, Sallis is able to draw on canonical texts from the philosophy of art (Kant, Schelling, Hegel, and Heidegger) to elaborate a sophisticated grounding for a hermeneutics of the beautiful. His analytical work presents for a wide audience a profound sense of how the landscape as a work of art echoes the earthly abode of the human.

Sallis' work in these texts serves as a sterling example of how one might approach a hermeneutic reading of painting. The continuity of thought between these two books represent a mature exploration of how to conduct a hermeneutic study of painting. The winding thread conjoining them is an inquiry into the ecstatic experience of a human drawing near to beauty.