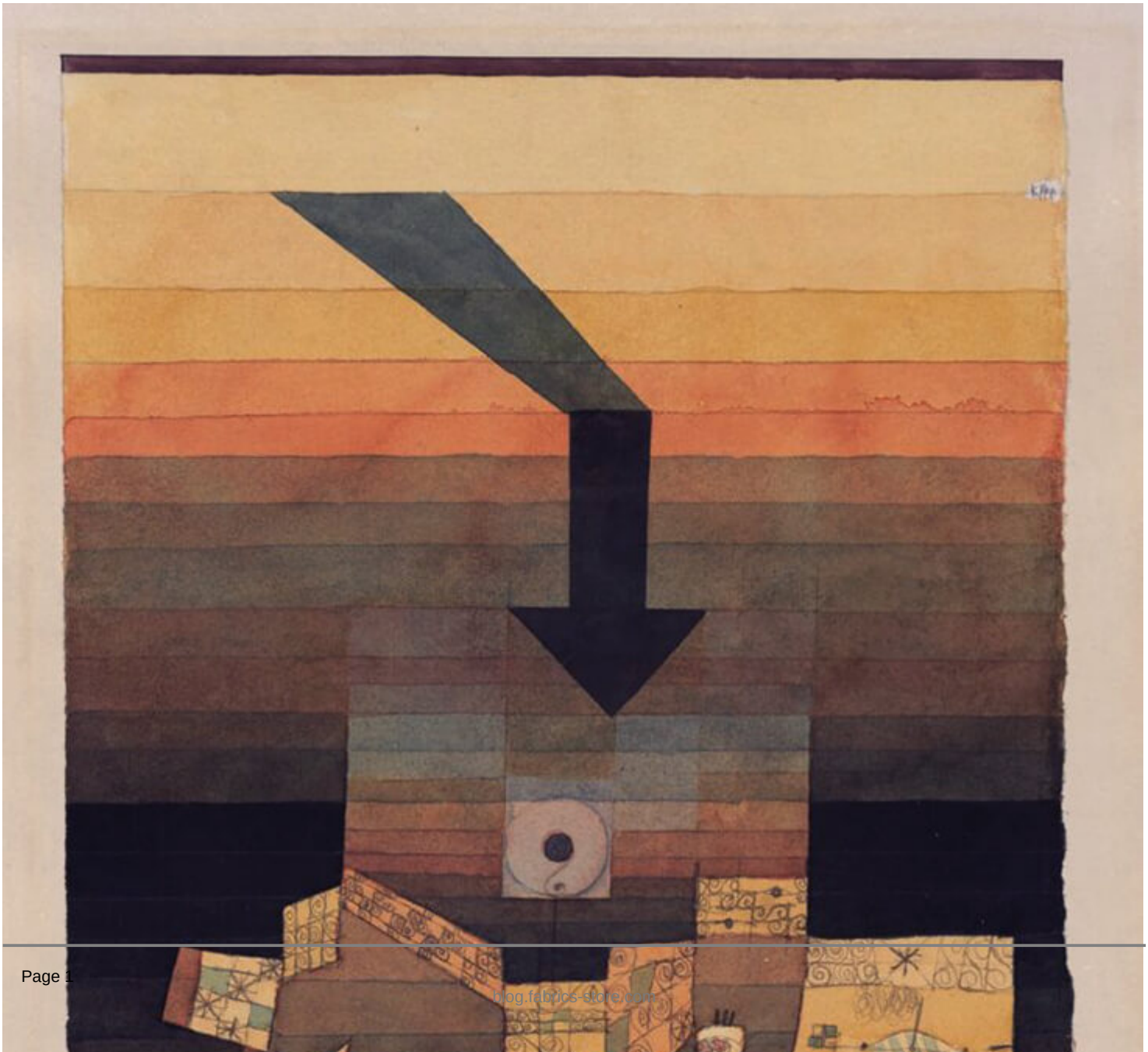


FS Colour Series: COGNAC Inspired by Paul Kleeâ??s Rich Browns

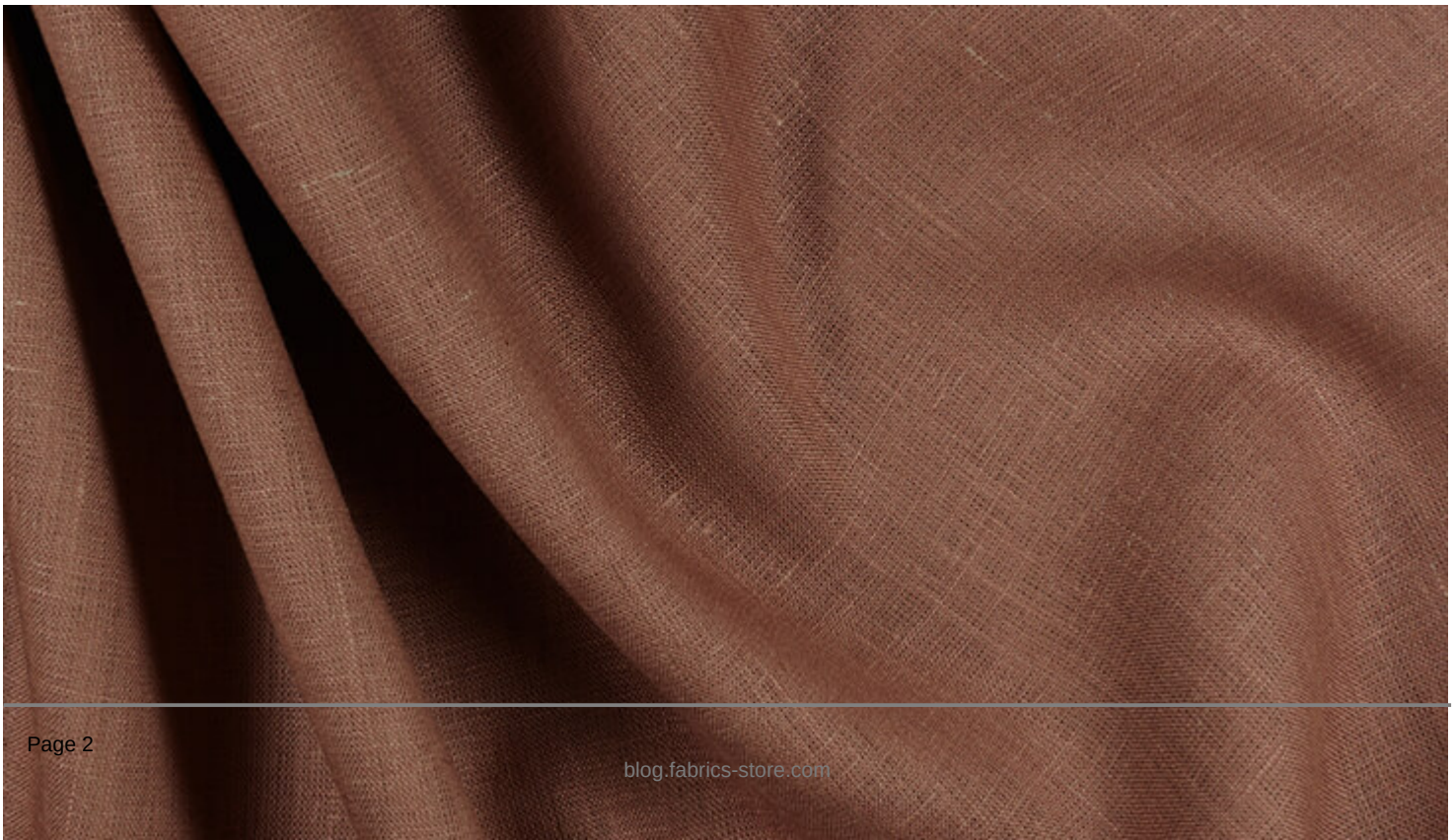
Description



Affected Place, 1922

Rich, warm browns like COGNAC linen appeared again and again in Swiss artist Paul Kleeâ??s art, colouring it with deep, dark and mysterious qualities. Klee was one of a generation of early 20th century artists who abandoned references to the real world, reaching instead for ways to represent transcendental experiences and unseen spiritual realms. He made complex geometric designs resembling tiles, textiles or patchwork quilts in a trademark palette of soft, subdued tones, exploring how subtle gradations in colour could convey harmonious, shimmering light effects. Warm browns and flesh tones drew his imagery closer to nature and the human body, which he saw as gateways into another world.

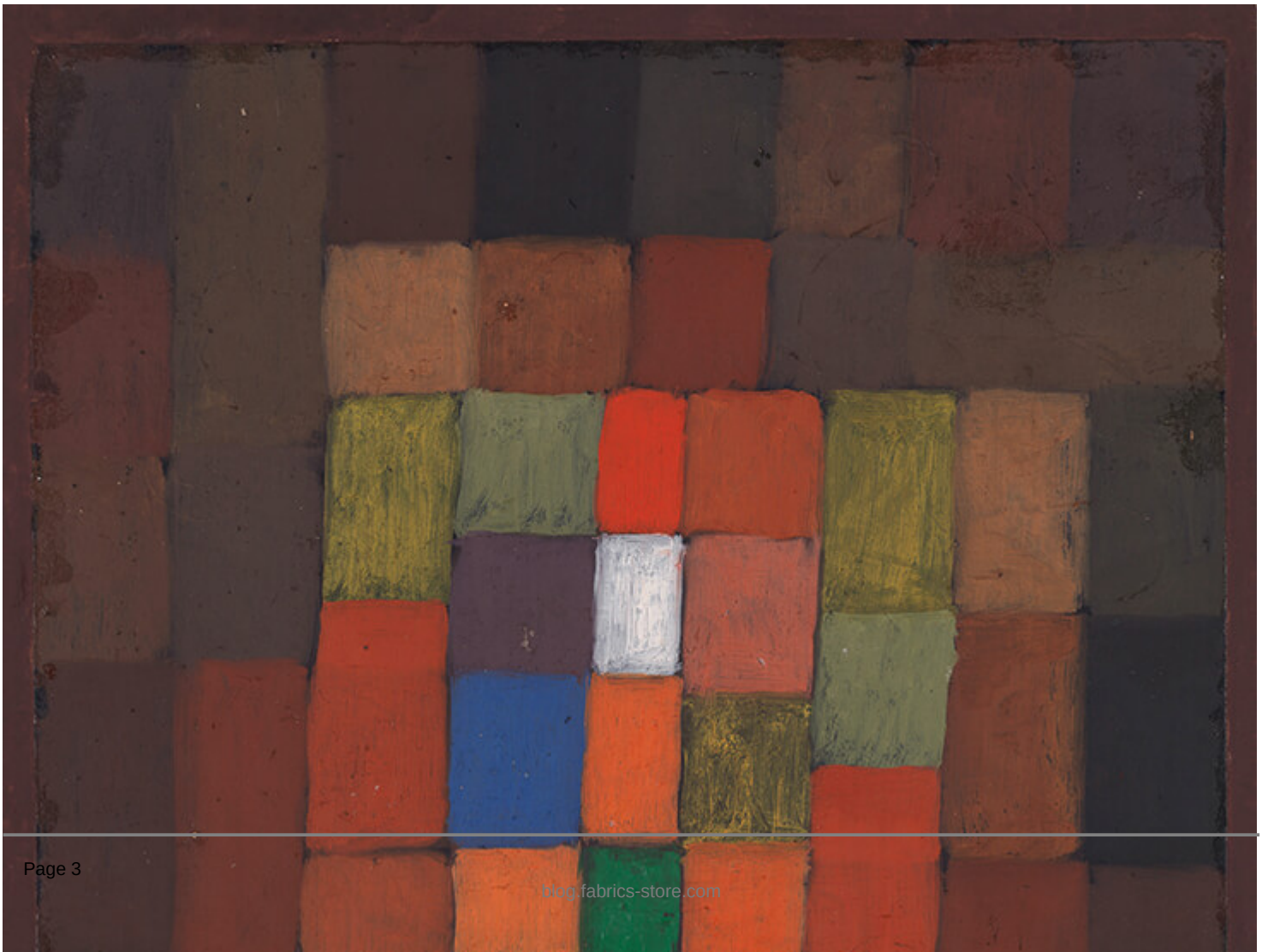
Klee was born in 1879 in Munchenbuchsee near Bern, Switzerland. His fatherâ??s role as a music teacher influenced the young Kleeâ??s creative mind, investing in him a lifelong fascination with transformative, internal experiences. In 1898 Klee trained as a painter in Munich, Germany. It was here that Klee first became familiar with German Expressionism, and he made lifelong friendships with members of the Blue Rider Group including Vasily Kandinsky and Franz Marc. Other influences on Kleeâ??s art came from the geometric facets of Cubism, and the shifting colour planes of Robert and Sonia Delaunay.



Multi Purpose Cognac Signature Finish Midweight Linen

Klee made a life-changing trip to Tunisia in 1914, where the crisp, clear light of North Africa had a profound and long-lasting influence on his way of making art. From this point on, he began painting powerful internal experiences rather than external reference points. His painted worlds became increasingly eccentric, featuring lively geometric patterns, curious characters, and meandering shapes and lines drawn entirely from his imagination.

The 1920s marked another dramatic turning point in Kleeâ??s career, when he joined the teaching faculty at Germanyâ??s radical new Bauhaus School of Art and Design. This period was to be Kleeâ??s most prolific and successful yet, when his powers of invention became even more potent, daring and free. Perhaps it was in part the influence of the Bauhaus environment, where teachers encouraged students to explore spontaneous new ways of working with colour and geometric abstraction, and in turn, pushed forward into new territory with their own art.



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Dynamic Gradation, 1923

In the curious drawing *Affected Place,* 1922, Klee paints ambient, horizontal bands of warm ochre and brown tones suggesting a sunset darkening towards the centre of the image. An angular, arrow-like form pulls our eye into an area of intense activity, populated by an assemblage of strange objects and creatures. Klee saw image like this as a way of edging closer to ethereal, otherworldly experience, writing, â??the longer the journey between here and the world beyond is, the more perceptible the tragic tension becomes.â?•

Made just a year later, Kleeâ??s painting *Dynamic Gradation,* 1923 abandons whimsical lines and narrative undercurrents, instead focusing exclusively on the ambient, atmospheric possibilities of harmonious tones. Here soft blocks of warm mid-brown are piled on top of one another like a constructed wall or a patchwork quilt. In amongst the browns, Klee intersperses patches of bright white and electric blue, which act like chinks of iridescent light, or the presence of ghostly forces at work. Throughout the 1920s Klee flitted between pure geometric abstraction and the creation of strange, spirited characters who play out unknown stories. In *Ventriloquist and Crier in the Moor,* 1923, Klee balances his trademark soft brown and green colour scheme with surreal, dream-like creatures who seem to have crept in from an unknown world.



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Historical Site, 1927

Later in the 1920s Klee began experimenting with an atomizer, spraying paint onto surfaces to create soft, airbrush-like effects onto which his bizarre, child-like stories could unfold. In *Historical Site,* 1927, a mellow brown envelops the entire background with soft, mysterious light, while a dense tangle of structural, linear forms dance across its surface as if floating mid-air.

CATEGORY

1. COLOUR SERIES

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