

## Bauhaus prehistory

Reform movements emerged from artists' groups and social activists to challenge the soullessness of industry with arguments in favor of the transformative cultural power of art education and "good design":

Britain:	Arts & Crafts Movement (William Morris, John Ruskin), 1860-1910
U.S.:	Craftsman Style (Gustav Stickley, Louis Tiffany), 1890s Arts & Crafts Movement (Chicago, Boston, linked to social reform), 1897
Germany:	Deutscher Werkbund ("German Work Federation," Peter Behrens, Hermann Muthesius), 1907 Arbeitsrat für Kunst ("Workers Council for Art"), 1918-21
Austria:	Weiner Werkstätte ("Vienna Workshop," architects, artists, and designers), 1903

## Bauhaus, first phase: Weimar (1919-25)

Named *Bauhaus* ("House of Building"), the new school resulted from the merger of the Grand Ducal School of Arts & Crafts and the Weimar Academy of Fine Arts, representing the first flush of a new republic (the "Weimar Republic," following a revolution in 1918 and replacing the imperial form of government with a liberal democracy, voted in by a constitutional assembly that met in Weimar in 1919). Architect **Walter Gropius** was the founding director, yet initially there was no instruction in architecture (but a strong idea of the "total" work of art).

### Principles:

Rejection of academism and naturalism as basis for art production.

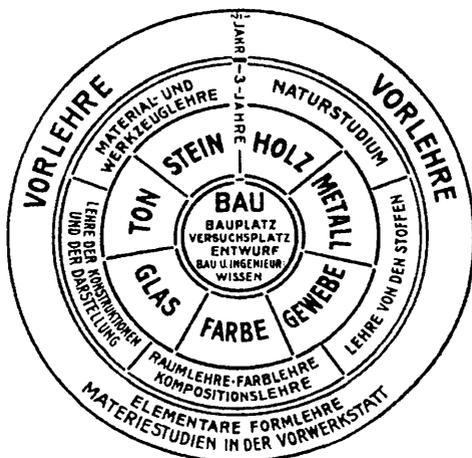
*Einheitskunstwerk* (suggested by cathedral engraving on the manifesto): ". . . the great building in which there will be no boundary between monumental and decorative art."- Walter Gropius (Bauhaus Manifesto, 1919)

the "rejuvenation of humanity" through good design (influenced by Soviet Russia, which in turn copied the Bauhaus, founding the *Vkhutemas* in 1920)

### Coursework:

The preliminary course merged the spiritualism of the Swiss Johannes Itten, followed by the technological enthusiasm of Hungarian Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, under the overarching metaphor of architecture.

Clay, Metal, Glass, Wood, Stone, Color, Weaving- and eventually photography, film.



Continued on reverse

## **Bauhaus Handout, cont.**

### **Second and Third phase, Bauhaus Dessau (1925-32) and Berlin (1932-33)**

With a new building inaugurated in the industrial town of Dessau in 1925, architecture becomes part of the curriculum. **Hannes Meyer** is named director after Gropius resigns in 1928, and turns towards leftist politics and trade unionism in an attempt to bring Bauhaus designs into production. **Ludwig Mies van der Rohe** becomes director when Meyer is fired in 1930, he moves the school to Berlin in an attempt to work with the Nazi government.

The school was closed by its own leaders in 1933 after the Nazi government cut off all funding. Exiles spread out into various countries in the Allied network during the war.

### **The legacies of the Bauhaus, 1933-present**

- Soviet Union in the late 1930s, as students loyal to the Communist Hannes Meyer flee to Moscow following his firing
- Tel Aviv in the 1930s-40s, as exiled Jewish students from the Bauhaus build 4,000 modernist buildings in British Palestine
- U.S.A. during and after WW2 (Harvard, Yale, Black Mountain College, MIT, the "New Bauhaus" in Chicago)
- Postwar West Germany (Hochschule für Gestaltung, Ulm)
- more diffusely, Brazil and Argentina, as technocratic aesthetics were promoted during the 1950s and '60s as part of "developmentalism" in Latin America

"I have read that under the name of postmodernism, architects are getting rid of the Bauhaus project, throwing out the baby of experimentation with the bathwater of functionalism." (Postwar German theorist of democracy, Jürgen Habermas)

## Images (selected) for **Lecture 14**

Logos for the Weimar Bauhaus (Karl-Peter Röhl) and the Dessau Bauhaus (Oskar Schlemmer)  
Philip Webb. Red House. Bexleyheath. Kent (for William Morris), 1859.  
Morris and company. chairs.  
Hermann Muthesius. Das englische Haus ("The English House"), architectural publication, 1908.  
Peter Behrens, AEG turbine factory. Berlin, 1910.  
Werkbund yearbooks. 1910s.  
Walter Gropius. Fagus Factory. Alfeld on the Leine. 1911-13.  
Max Pechstein, poster for the Workers Council for Art, woodcut, 1918.  
Lyonel Feininger (woodcut) and Walter Gropius (text), Program of the State Bauhaus in Weimar, April 1919.  
Bauhaus curriculum diagram, 1922.  
Johannes Itten wearing a robe of his own design, 1922.  
Johannes Itten, Colour festival, painting, 1917.  
Paul Klee, Dangerous fool, painting, 1923.  
Paul Klee, Ancient Sound/Abstract on Black, painting on cardboard. 1925.  
Paul Klee, diagrammatic sketch illustrating the structure of Bauhaus teaching, 1922, from Preliminary Course.  
Paul Klee. Pedagogical Sketchbooks, Bauhaus book, 1924.  
Wassili Kandinsky, Point and Line on Plane, Bauhaus book, 1926.  
Exercise by student in Itten's course, 1923.  
Gunta Stölzl and the weaving workshop.  
Marcel Breuer with textile by Gunta Stölzl, "African" Chair, 1921.  
Sommerfeld House. Berlin, 1920-21.  
Invitation card with woodcut.  
Entrance hall.  
Joost Schmidt, carved decorations in teak from the banister above the rear door of the entrance hall  
Helm , applied curtain.  
Haus am Horn, Housing Development, Weimar, 1920-22.  
Models.  
Construction site.  
Kitchen.  
Joseph Hartwig, Bauhaus chess set, 1922.  
Walter Gropius, Bauhaus / Hochschule für Gestaltung, Dessau, 1925.  
Curtain wall.  
Workshops.  
Office of the director.  
Theater.  
Classrooms.  
Staircase.  
Student housing.  
House for masters.  
Sigfried Giedion, Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition, textbook, 1941.  
Oskar Schlemmer, Bauhaus Stairway, painting, 1932.  
Herbert Bayer, Sans serif alphabet and project for a newsstand (Reklamearchitektur), collage, 1924.  
Theo van Doesburg and Comelis van Eesteren, Polychrome scheme for a private house, 1923.  
El Lissitzky, New Man from the Victory over the Sun portfolio, 1923.  
Erich Consemüller, Woman in a Wassili Club Chair by Marcel Breuer wearing a mask by Schlemmer, 1926.  
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Photogram. 1925.  
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Painting, Photography, Film, Bauhaus book. 1925.  
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Light Prop for an Electric Stage (Light-Space Modulator), 1930. Reproduction at Harvard.  
Lux Feininger, Joost Schmidt and Lies Bayer at the Bauhaus Metal Party, photograph. 1928.  
Lux Feininger, Sports at the Bauhaus, photograph. c. 1928.  
Hannes Meyer. Co-op: linocut, shop window and prototypical interior. 1920s.  
Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer. Peterschule, Basel, 1926. "Functionalist" diagrams.  
Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona Pavilion (and chair), International Exposition, Barcelona. Spain, 1928-29.  
Iwao Yamawaki, The Coup against the Bauhaus, photomontage, 1932.  
" g n a " art exhibition, Munich, poster. 1937.  
Max Bill. Hochschule für Gestaltung, Ulm. West Germany, 1950s.

Asger Jorn, International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus, ceramics encounter, Albisola, 1954.

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