

Audio Guide

BAUHAUS MUSEUM WEIMAR



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600: Welcome

Hallo and welcome to the Bauhaus Museum in Weimar.

The Bauhaus was the leading 20th century school of art, design and architecture. It was founded in 1919 in Weimar. In 1925, growing political pressure forced the Bauhaus to relocate to Dessau. In 1932, it then moved to Berlin. Just one year later in 1933, under extreme Nazi harassment, the Bauhaus decided to dissolve and close. The first years of the Bauhaus in Weimar were eventful. Bauhaus underwent far-reaching changes. Initially, the focus was on craftwork; later, this shifted to industrial production. Quite a number of classic Bauhaus designs – from chairs and lamps to crockery – were developed here in Weimar. You can see many examples of these designs in our main display – even though

we can only show a fraction of our entire collection. Today, the Bauhaus Museum holdings total around 10,000 items. For the time being, the museum, opened in 1995, is provisionally housed in the classicist building designed by the court architect Clemens Wenzeslaus Coudray. In future, our collection, which is one of the leading Bauhaus collections in the world, will be on view in a new museum close by. The selected exhibits on this tour are marked by an audio guide symbol and a number. Simply key in the number and press play to hear the commentary. The first number is directly here in the foyer - at the colourful glass tower. And now, enjoy discovering the many different facets of Bauhaus in its very creative years in Weimar.

Introduction

601: Johannes Itten, Fire Tower, 1920



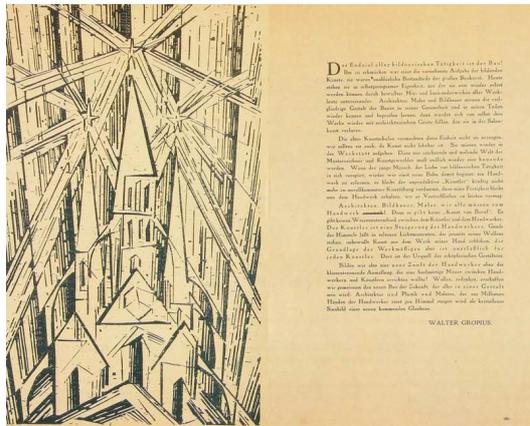
Itten, Johannes: Turm des Feuers, 1920
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

In 1920, the original of this sculpture stood outside the studio belonging to Bauhaus teacher Johannes Itten in Weimar's Ilm Park. No doubt, people out for a stroll were amazed by Itten's remarkable work. The colourful bright glass of his powerful *Turm des Feuers* – Fire Tower - was visible from far away – and since the tower also contained 12 bells, it was audible as well! In this work, Itten unified space, sound, light and colour in a radically new way. The new approach

in the Fire Tower epitomises the unity of all artistic disciplines – the key idea behind the Bauhaus. This tower also combines architecture and sculpture, music and glass to create a total art work – a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. When the Bauhaus was founded in Weimar in 1919, many people were quite surprised and even bewildered by this state College of Design. Walter Gropius, Bauhaus' first director, introduced teaching practices quite revolutionary for a university at that time. He wanted to tap all his students' abilities and train them to become multi-talented, cosmopolitan designers and architects. They had to work in teams, applying an interdisciplinary approach to produce everything from residential housing plans to designs for lamps, carpets and furnishings, creating a new functional living environment to meet people's real needs. In many areas, Gropius initiated totally new departures – an approach that did not only make friends for the Bauhaus. In 1925, when right-wing conservative forces gained power in Thuringia, the Bauhaus had to relocate to Dessau. Gropius left behind around 165 unique design objects, which he donated to the Weimar State Art Collection. These objects are the foundation of the Bauhaus museum and make the Weimar collection unique throughout the world.

Bauhaus Manifesto

602: Manifesto with cover woodcut by Lyonel Feininger, 1919



Feininger, Lyonel: Kathedrale der Zukunft, 1919
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

Why is the Bauhaus called the Bauhaus? The answer can be found in the Bauhaus manifesto by Walter Gropius. The title page shows a Gothic Cathedral, a woodcut by Lyonel Feininger, one of the renowned Bauhaus teachers. This image epitomises the Bauhaus concept, symbolising the perfect interplay between art and craftwork on a single major work. Walter Gropius's vision was precisely this combination of art and craft skills. He took the name Bauhaus from the Gothic "Bauhütte" – the masons lodges at a medieval construction site. This also explains why Gropius focused so strongly on craft training. He wanted all the Bauhaus arts disciplines to work to-

gether to make the everyday world a better and more attractive place after the devastation of the First World War. But the idea of a workshop training was not entirely new. In 1902, the Belgian artist Henry van de Velde, a leading figure in the art nouveau movement, had already put forward the same idea when he founded his arts and crafts department in Weimar. Van de Velde's work led to a new School of Arts and Applied Arts in 1907, established by the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar. There, van de Velde taught his students practical skills in workshops. In 1919, this School merged with the Duchy of Weimar's Academy of Arts under a new name – the State Bauhaus Weimar. The Bauhaus also took over the predecessor schools' buildings, both designed by van de Velde. By the way, van de Velde also put forward Walter Gropius as the new university's Director. Without him, there might never have been the Bauhaus in Weimar. If you'd like to know just how intensely Walter Gropius expressed his vision in the founding Bauhaus manifesto – and what he said much later about the eventful years after the birth of the Bauhaus, just key in 60.

The Bauhaus Manifesto by Walter Gropius begins with the words:

“The ultimate aim of all artistic activity is a building! The decoration of buildings was once the noblest function of fine arts, and fine arts were indispensable to great architecture. Today they exist in complacent isolation, and can only be rescued by the conscious co-operation and collaboration of all craftsmen. “

A little later, he makes the direct appeal:

“Architects, sculptors, painters, we must all return to crafts! (...) Let us desire, conceive, and create the new building of the future together, combining everything in a single form – architecture, sculpture and painting – which will one day rise towards the heavens from the hands of a million workers as the crystalline symbol of a new and coming faith.“

Here, with a strong dose of pathos, Gropius conjures up his vision of an ideal society embracing all areas all work and life. In 1963, when he was 80, Gropius wrote a letter explaining what had characterised the early Bauhaus in Weimar. In his view, the Bauhaus Manifesto grew out of:

“...a blend of profound depression resulting from the lost [First World] war with its breakdown of intellectual and economic life and the ardent hope and desire to build something new from these ruins (...). Young people joined us from Germany and abroad (...) to be part of a community which wanted to establish new people in a new environment (...).“

Bauhaus in Weimar

603: Walter Gropius, Wheel-like diagram of the curriculum, 1922

This wheel-like diagram from 1922 shows the three-tiered structure of the Bauhaus curriculum. Students started with a six-month preliminary course, mandatory for anyone wanting to study at the Bauhaus. Students successfully passing the preliminary course began a three-year training in one of the Bauhaus workshops specialising in, for example, metal, wood, ceramics or textiles. These practical craft skills lay at the heart of the Bauhaus training. In line with this approach, the Bauhaus did not have *students* and *professors*, but apprentices, journeymen and Masters. In the workshops, students also learnt more than just craft skills; they learnt a holistic way of thinking. The aim was to produce beautiful objects. Yet, at the same time, these were designed explicitly for everyday life. They should be more functional than existing objects and able to be produced better and cheaper. The Bauhaus workshops became, in Walter Gropius's words, "laboratories for industry" - and the students real inventors. Students completing the workshop training took a trade test

with a chamber of trade and crafts. They had then finished the main Bauhaus programme. The best students, though, could stay at the Bauhaus, taking a kind of post-graduate building and construction course. You can see the course marked "*Bau*" - building - in the hub of the wheel. The course focused on architecture. However, Gropius could only organise proper architectural training after the Bauhaus moved to Dessau. Nonetheless, in Weimar the most talented students were at least allowed to work in Gropius's private architectural office to gain an insight into the practical side of architecture. Gropius also included the Bauhaus workshops in his projects to provide students with practical real-world tasks and improve the college's finances. For example, the sculpture workshop prepared architectural models for the houses that Gropius built, the carpentry workshop supplied the cupboards, chairs and tables for the interior designs, and the weaving workshop provided carpets and tapestries.

Bauhaus in Weimar

604: Bauhaus Signet by Karl Peter Röhl, 1919

Soon after the Bauhaus was founded in 1919, the college of design needed its own official signet – a logo to clearly identify Bauhaus documents, publications, and products. But how could you express in one single icon all the Bauhaus ideals – that diversity, intellectual freedom, and gender equality which Walter Gropius hoped to realise at his school? Gropius did not design the signet himself. Instead, he held a competition among the students. The award-winning designs are circled here in red. The first prize went to Karl Peter Röhl for his star-shaped matchstick man. Röhl's signet included a series of symbols to underline the vision of broad intellectual freedom. The matchstick man's outstretched arms recall Leonardo da Vinci's image of the perfect human being, while the two-tone black and white head evokes the Chi-

nese Yin and Yang sign. The signet also includes other religious and philosophical symbols, including the swastika sign on the right. This, though, has nothing to do with the Nazi Party, which only adopted the swastika as its symbol later on. Instead, the swastika here is an ancient Indian symbol of good fortune. The Egyptian pyramid worn around the figure's neck symbolises the ideal of communal creation, a masterpiece of technology and organisation produced by everyone working together. The star-shaped matchstick man was the signet of the State Bauhaus Weimar for three years. Then it was replaced by a completely different design. To find out about the new signet's design and how it reflected a fundamental shift at the Bauhaus, just key in 61.

You can see the second Bauhaus signet in the display case on the left. In 1922, this new signet replaced the star-shaped matchstick man designed by Karl Peter Röhl. The new design, the well-known profile head, was created by Oskar Schlemmer, one of the Bauhaus Masters. This head remained the Bauhaus logo even after the move to Dessau and, later, to Berlin. The differences between the two signets could hardly be greater – first, a matchstick man laden with esoteric symbols, and then a rigorously geometrical head, austere and functional. The contrast reflects a decisive change at the Weimar Bauhaus. Initially, Walter Gropius regarded the individual craft object as the ideal end product. However, from 1921, he increasingly focused on industrial production. Gropius realised this was the only way to meet the needs of a modern industrial society. His insight led to a new key theme – rather than combin-

ing art and craftwork, the focus was now on creating a unity of art and technology. Gropius prompted his teachers and students to develop prototypes for series production. Everything needed in everyday life – from chairs to jugs and lamps – was no longer to be handmade, but manufactured with the help of modern machines. The industrial products were to be attractive, but also functional, durable, and cheap. This also expressed Bauhaus's social commitment - designing and manufacturing aesthetically pleasing objects for everyday use. It was this approach that turned Bauhaus from a college of design into a genuinely progressive centre of education. To that extent, despite their differences, both signets reflect the primary focus of the Bauhaus philosophy – putting the individual at the heart of its work.

Independent art by the teachers

Paul Klee, one of the leading Bauhaus masters, painted *Wasserpark im Herbst* – Water Park in Autumn in 1926. Just one year before, in 1925, growing political pressure had forced the Bauhaus to move from Weimar to Dessau. Paul Klee's oil painting seems to reference this period of transition. The work may well take the Ilm Park in Weimar at night as its theme, looking towards the arches of the railway viaduct, seen here slightly to the left of the painting's midpoint. There are two bright circles on the right at the top and two triangular roofs below. Everything here is doubled – the moon, the houses and – in essence – the park as well, since there is also a well-known park landscape in Dessau. In this work, Paul Klee is apparently coming to terms with his farewell – a departure that was also a new start. In 1926, when the Masters' Houses were finished in Dessau, he left Weimar with his family forever.

Paul Klee was among the visual artists that Gropius invited to teach at the Bauhaus in Weimar. There, every workshop was headed by two masters, a *Meister der Form* – Master of Form - and a *Meister des Handwerks* – Master Craftsman. The *Meister des Handwerks* were all craftsmen with many years of experience in their own areas and responsible for the craft training. The *Meister der Form* were all international renowned artists, including Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger and Wassily Kandinsky. Since the Bauhaus was not an academy of art but a school of design, the *Meister der Form* did not train their students to be artists, but taught the basic design principles of working with colour and shape. However, every *Meister der Form* put their own individual stamp on their courses, contributing to the diversity so much at the heart of the Bauhaus concept of training.

Independent art by the teachers

606: Lyonel Feininger, *Gelmeroda XI*, 1928



Feininger, Lyonel: *Gelmeroda XI*, 1928
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

This painting by Lyonel Feininger is entitled *Gelmeroda XI*. It takes the church at Gelmeroda as its theme. Gelmeroda is was a small town near Weimar, which Feininger often visited during his Weimar years. The image of the church has been abstracted through prismatic forms pointing in all directions rather like rays. This was a characteristic style for Feininger, and it made him into one of the leading painters and printmakers in modern art. Lyonel Feininger, appointed as the first Bauhaus Master in

1919, headed the school's printmaking workshop from 1921. The workshop was open to all Masters and students. There, everyone was free to experiment with woodcuts, lithographs and prints. This made the printmaking workshop one of the pivotal creative hubs in the Bauhaus. Lyonel Feininger was an American with German roots – and he was by far from the only foreign teacher at the Bauhaus. Around half of the artists working there came from outside Germany. The Bauhaus Masters were from many different countries – for example, Johannes Itten from Switzerland, László Moholy-Nagy from Hungary, and Wassily Kandinsky from Russia. A fair proportion of the students also came from abroad. Bauhaus had on average 150 to 200 students – and around 25 per cent came from abroad. At that time, in an era charged with a strong sense of national consciousness, this was quite remarkable. Around half the students were also women – a very high proportion for those days. Even more sensationally though, Walter Gropius did not require a high school diploma for students wanting to apply to the Bauhaus – anyone talented enough should be allowed to join. If you now key in 62, you can find out why this painting is called *Gelmeroda XI*—and discover why that this work is especially important for Weimar.



Feininger, Lyonel: Gelmeroda
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

The little church of Gelmeroda, just outside Weimar, was one of Lyonel Feininger's favourite subjects. He painted this motif no less than 13 times in oils - and our painting here is number eleven in that series. If you

include all the sketches, watercolours and prints he made of this church, it appears in nearly 150 of Feininger's works. They cover a period of almost 50 years. Feininger completed his first Gelmeroda work in 1906 and the last in 1955, a year before he died in his home city of New York, aged 84. Feininger returned to New York in 1937. Under the Nazi Party, the situation in his adoptive country of Germany was becoming increasingly unbearable. The Nazis confiscated works by Feininger and his fellow Bauhaus artists as "degenerate art". They didn't spare the art collections in Weimar either. There, the Nazis found and confiscated another, earlier work from the Gelmeroda series – a painting now hanging in a New York museum. Against this background, it's all the more important for Weimar and the Bauhaus Museum that - thanks to many people's generous support - a painting from the Gelmeroda series could be brought back to Weimar in 2007. The Nazis tried to erase the memory of modernism and the Bauhaus. They failed. Today, the Bauhaus is regarded as the most

Preliminary Course

607: Rudolf Lutz, Structure and Composition Studies, 1919-22

The key themes for new Bauhaus students on the obligatory six-month preliminary course were form and material, rhythm, nature and contrast. These four sketches give you an idea of how these themes were treated. The sketches date from 1919 to 1922, when Johannes Itten, the Swiss painter, educationalist and theorist, was teaching the preliminary course at the Weimar Bauhaus. Itten was one of the first Bauhaus Masters. He initiated and designed the preliminary course himself. His conceptual approach was holistic, embracing the entire human being - intellect, body and soul. Itten wanted to draw the creative power out of each individual student and intellectually sensitise her or him to sight and touch. Consequently, he not only integrated materials and nature studies in his lessons, but also used rhythmic exercises

and gymnastics to help students awaken their creativity. At that time, such an educational approach in a preliminary course was totally new. Before students could start their main studies, they spent six-months finding out if they were suited to art and design. So from the very start, all students were supposed to – and had to! – work on practical projects. They experimented with materials, forms and colours. At the end of the preliminary course, the students were assigned to a workshop for their three year Bauhaus training - a decision that also took into account a student's individual talents and preferences for working in wood, metal, ceramics or textiles. But of course, that only applied to students who passed the preliminary course - and that was far from all of them.

Preliminary Course

On the six-month preliminary course, students also produced sculptural works – such as, for example, this impressive spiral tower. The work you see here is a reconstruction. The original dates from 1920 and was built in the preliminary course taught by Johannes Itten. He encouraged students to experiment with materials, form and space. As you see here, to find suitable pieces, they would also search the junk yards as well. Johannes Itten saw the preliminary course as a chance for each individual student to discover and develop her or his own creativity. But Walter Gropius took a rather different view. He also wanted designers able to work in a team, making new, attractive products for everyday life. In 1922, with Gropius increasingly focusing on prototypes for industrial production, the differences between Itten and Gropius became irreconcilable. Itten handed in his resignation. He left the Bau-

haus in 1923 and returned to Switzerland. Itten's preliminary course remained a fixed element in Bauhaus training right up until 1933, when the school finally closed. But the course content and idea changed dramatically. Itten's creative education, rooted in his esoteric beliefs, was abandoned. Instead, under László Moholy-Nagy, the Hungarian avant-garde artist who became the preliminary course Master, the emphasis was on a targeted preparation for a career in design. Under the motto of unifying art and technology, Moholy-Nagy introduced systematic exercises on touch and sight and made his students prepare studies in the use of balance and space. From 1923, Moholy-Nagy's preliminary course was also supported by Josef Albers in the preliminary workshop. Now, if you look back, you'll see - on the right-hand wall - a replica of one of the studies

Workshops

609: Theodor Bogler, Combination teapot L1, 1923

This teapot epitomises the decisive changes at the Bauhaus between 1922 and 1923. At that time, there were intense discussions at the Bauhaus. Should it change its focus from handcrafted individual pieces to modern serially manufactured products – and if so, how? Walter Gropius called on his teachers to turn their workshops into laboratories. There, they should develop prototypes for industry – creating a new unity of art and technology. This unity is evident in the combination teapot designed by the young Bauhaus graduate Theodor Bogler. All the prototypes developed at the Bauhaus were numbered – and this one is no exception. This teapot is L1. Bogler had clearly grasped the basic dilemma in industrial goods. Every piece looks the same - the same shape, colour and size. To overcome this monotony, Bogler developed a kind of modular system. He took the individual teapot elements of body, handle,

and spout, and designed different versions of them. The pre-fabricated parts could be combined to create new variations on a theme - which is why Bogler's design was called a "combination teapot". In the display case on the left, you can see some examples of different combination teapots. Crucially, though, the flowing glaze on Bogler's teapots gave them an individual finish. In this way, he created a serially manufactured product that almost looked like individual pieces. From today's perspective, Theodor Bogler's L1 combination teapot is modern design icon. But when it was produced, his bold design turned out to be flop. As a result of such setbacks, the Bauhaus artists and designers were very self-critical. To discover more about that – and why it is a myth to talk of a single Bauhaus style, just key in 63.

Designs could be very popular at the Bauhaus – but that was no guarantee of their appeal to consumers. This rather painful but crucial lesson was an essential part of the Bauhaus training. The newly developed prototypes were tested at trade fairs or sold directly to customers at markets in Weimar. After all, the Bauhaus designs for series production were not intended for an elite minority, but a mass audience. Bauhaus wanted to make affordable, functional and aesthetically appealing design products for the general population. Apparently, though, the time was not yet ripe for Theodor Bogler's L1 combination teapot. Its severe geometric shapes left consumers cold. The response was prompt. The same year, Theodor Bogler and Otto Lindig pro-

duced a series of new teapot prototypes - and you can see examples of them in the display cabinet around the corner on the right. The teapots have a completely different use of form. They retain the same simple design but are no longer as cold and functional. Instead, these smooth shapes are rather informed by traditional designs. And so it's not really possible to talk of a single characteristic Bauhaus style. The design of Bauhaus products was always the subject of debate. If a particular design did not have a broad appeal, it was changed - as you can see from the teapots produced in the ceramics workshop at the Weimar Bauhaus.

Workshops

610: Wilhelm Wagenfeld, Table Lamps



Wagenfeld, Wilhelm: Tischlampe
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

These table lamps are iconic designs. They come in two variations - with a glass shaft and base, as here on the left, and in the metal version on the right. These table lamps are some of the most famous design objects ever produced at the Bauhaus – and the most successful! As "Bauhaus lamps", they are still produced in large

numbers even today. The prototypes were developed between 1923 to 24 in the Bauhaus metal workshop. They give you an insight into the Bauhaus working methods at that time. The lamps are closely associated with Wilhelm Wagenfeld, who started studying at the Bauhaus in 1923. But in fact two other Bauhaus artists played a part in these legendary designs. In 1922 to 23, Gyula Pap designed an electric tea machine with cylindrical glass feet and a spherical glass water container. Building on that idea, Carl Jakob Jucker produced the type of table lamp you can see here on the left - with a cylindrical glass shaft fitted to a thick, circular glass base. Finally, Wilhelm Wagenfeld added the characteristic opaque spherical glass shade to complete the first variation of the Bauhaus lamp with a glass base. Wagenfeld then went on to develop the metal version, on the right, on his own. So the world famous Bauhaus table lamp was not just the inspiration of one clever designer. Several students played a part in developing this table lamp – even if that was not the aim they had in mind at the time.

Workshops

611: Peter Keler, Cradle, 1922

In 1922, Peter Keler developed the prototype for this baby's cradle in the cabinet-making workshop at the Weimar Bauhaus. The cradle perfectly illustrates the qualities that students had to learn and apply in their Bauhaus training - creativity, functionalism and cooperation. In his search for a way to ideally combine colours and shape for his cradle, Peter Keler applied the colour theory developed by the artist and Bauhaus Master Wassily Kandinsky. Kandinsky linked blue, red and yellow - the three primary colours - to the circle, square and triangle, the three basic shapes. You can see how that looks on the cradle. The proportions of the individual pieces are also carefully related: the diameter of the two tubes is exactly the same as the

cradle's length. Keler's cradle takes a triangle expanding from its base as its basic structure. This gives the baby enough room to move and an open field of vision. At first glance, the cradle looks as though it could tip up. In fact, though, it's very stable. The centre of gravity in the black circular tubes is so low that even an older child can't make the cradle tip over. Keler's cradle also illustrates the cooperation between the workshops at the Bauhaus. The wicker inserts along the sides letting in light and air were made in the weaving workshop, while the cradle was painted in the mural workshop. Peter Keler's cradle is an iconic modern design. Like so many other Bauhaus workshop products, it is still manufactured today.

Architecture

612: Walter Determann, Draft of a Bauhaus Housing Development, 1920

At first glance, this looks like an abstract sketch. In fact, though, it's the plan for a Bauhaus housing development in Weimar. The building elevation to the right, the yellow overall view and the three photos also belong to the plan. In 1920, with Bauhaus urgently needing more space, Walter Gropius launched a student competition to design a Bauhaus development. The exhibits here document the competition draft by Bauhaus student Walter Determann. Ever since it was founded in 1919, Bauhaus had been chronically short of space. The Bauhaus in Weimar did not have enough teaching rooms and workshops. The town didn't even have enough affordable accommodation for the students. In the months after the collapse of Imperial Germany in 1918, the little town of Weimar was a leading actor on the political stage. Politicians gathered here to create a new constitution for the fledging German parliamen-

tary republic – popularly known as the Weimar Republic. And the town was not only full of politicians, but also reporters. On top of that, Germany was going through a period of severe economic hardship after the First World War. To solve the problem of space once and for all, Gropius envisaged a kind of modern university campus combining room to work and accommodation. Such a campus would also turn his idea of teachers and students living, working and relaxing together into a reality – an idea characteristic of Bauhaus. The development was supposed to be built on the outskirts of Weimar. The plot needed was a vast 500 metres by 400 metres – roughly the size of Weimar's historical old town. The plans were never realised. As so often, there was no money. Nonetheless, Walter Determann's draft really did include everything needed for this style of campus. To find out more, just key in 64.

The three photos and overall view give the best impression of how Walter Determann imagined his Bauhaus development in Weimar. The overall design has four light-houses at the corners. They should – literally and metaphorically – shine the light of Bauhaus into Weimar. The central block, behind the chequered surfaces, houses the main administration, exhibition and reception area. This is the largest building in the rigorously symmetrical structure. The two sketches on the wall and the yellow model give you an idea of how it was supposed to look in detail. The various residential blocks for students and guests are on the right and left of the main building. There is a large area behind them with a glass pyramid, surrounded by rays. Determann has labelled the pyramid on his plan as the Bauhaus symbol. The next structure is a

vast amphitheatre, sunk into the ground, and a stadium to host communal festivities, theatrical performances and games. The cube-shaped Masters' Houses are on either side of the amphitheatre. Next to them, the workshop buildings are set in rows like factory halls. The Bauhaus campus was supposed to be a place where people could work, create and invent together. The final section, right at the back on the narrow side of the model, contains a communal centre and canteen, as well as a kindergarten, sports area and playground. The campus also included a farm to provide food for the Bauhaus students and staff in the difficult post-First World War years. The complex had a swimming pool for relaxation as well. Due to lack of funds, though, the Bauhaus campus was never built.

Architecture

613: Farkas Molnár, Draft for the Bauhaus Am Horn Estate, 1922

The print at the top on the wall dates from 1922. It shows a second draft of the Bauhaus campus in Weimar. This development, offering accommodation and working space for all the Bauhaus students and teachers, was designed to connect directly to the Ilm Park in an area known as *Am Horn*, just above Goethe's Garden House. The print shows the main building with a tower. To the right, the workshop buildings look like a row of factory halls. The terraced accommodation for students and guests are on the left. The individual cube-shaped houses to accommodate the Bauhaus Masters are set in the large open space on the right. Once again, there was no money to construct such a project. At that time, Germany's hyperinflation was at its worst. Yet nonetheless, part of the plan was realised. For the Bauhaus Exhibition in 1923, Walter Gropius had one of the Masters' Houses built on the location as planned. The house became known as the

Haus am Horn - the only Bauhaus building ever constructed in Weimar. The *Haus am Horn* is open to the public and was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1996. The four photos on the left show the interior of the *Haus am Horn*. This was intended for a family with one or two children. This model house was designed by Georg Muche. Muche was not actually an architect, but the *Meister der Form* – Master of Form - in the Bauhaus weaving workshop. But this kind of interdisciplinary thinking was not only encouraged, it was also actively pursued as epitomising the Bauhaus approach. Team work was another important plank in the Bauhaus ideal. For the *Haus am Horn*, all the Bauhaus workshops were involved in the interior design. From furniture, to carpets and lamps - every detail was designed and produced at the Bauhaus. In line with Gropius's vision, the *Haus am Horn* is a modern *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a total art work.

Bauhaus Educational Theory

614: Rudolf Lutz, Poster for Itten's Lecture, 1919

In autumn 1919, this poster was put up on the information board to announce the first public lecture by Johannes Itten at the Weimar Bauhaus. Itten called his lecture

"Unser Spiel, unser Fest, unsere Arbeit" – roughly "Our Play, Our Party, Our Work".

In his title, Itten highlighted the three basic building blocks in the Bauhaus educational theory. Rudolf Lutz, the Bauhaus student who painted this poster, found an ingenious visual language to symbolise them. The yellow star shining to the left is "Our Play". It casts its light everywhere. The star stands for creative play - a readiness to experiment, use the imagination and cast off the straightjacket of academic traditions. At the Bauhaus, that was the prerequisite for any active creativity. And that's also why the Bauhaus was the first institution to consciously use play as a learning method – intended, of course, for

adult students! The red vertical beam is "our party". It rests on the purple block of "our work". Together, they represent communal life and work at the Bauhaus. The craft training in the workshops was strenuous. Students spent eight hours or more there everyday. Even the preliminary course had a very demanding schedule. The legendary Bauhaus festivities, planned together by teachers and students, provided fun and relaxation. These were teamwork in the best sense of the word – just as Walter Gropius had imagined in his Bauhaus Manifesto. There, in the Principles of the Bauhaus, he explicitly called for:

"The encouragement of friendly relations between masters and students outside work; therefore plays, lectures, poetry, music, costume parties. Establishing a cheerful ceremony at these gatherings."

Theatre

615: Eberhard Schrammen, Five Handpuppets, around 1923 (with Kurt Schwerdtfeger, Reflecting Colour-Light-Play)

The simultaneity of the dissimilar – an idea that characterises the early Bauhaus in Weimar. Here, radically different forms of expression and style could exist together - a principle vividly illustrated in two examples from the theatre workshop. Around 1923, Eberhard Schrammen designed the painted wooden puppets displayed on the beam. These stick figures were intended for a puppet play, the most archaic form of stage performance. Schrammen was in charge of the Bauhaus joinery workshop. Originally, there were three pairs of figures in different postures, clothing and colours. Today, the white figure's counterpart is missing. At the same time as this rather traditional puppet show was developed, Kurt Schwerdtfeger produced his "*Reflecting Colour-Light-Play*" with its ultramodern lighting effects. The photo at the bottom right gives you an idea of how it looked. The *Reflecting Colour-Light-*

Play produced a sort of light performance, a real stage show. In 1923, it was actually also performed live in Weimar. Schwerdtfeger made his own technical equipment using templates of geometrical shapes. He inserted different coloured transparent paper into the templates, which were constantly moving and lit by spotlights. As a result, the shapes, colours and light constantly changed as they were projected onto the wall as moving images. The black-and-white photo here can only give an impression of the light show. This completely new kind of stage performance was developed alongside such very traditional forms of drama as Schrammen's puppet shows – an indication of the range of creative diversity at the Bauhaus. It was hardly surprising that the theatre workshop was the source of such innovations. It was, after all, the creative hub at the Bauhaus. To find out more, just key in 65.

The theatre workshop played a crucial role in the holistic training offered at the Bauhaus. It also had a unique status. The other workshops trained 5 students for a qualification. In the theatre workshop, though, they could experiment and try out things as they liked. The theatre workshop was open to all Bauhaus students and teachers. Here, you could free your imagination and explore and develop a feeling for space, stage and sound. It offered a 'theatre laboratory' with shared projects creating stage designs and costumes, or studying dance and music, or preparing the legendary Bauhaus plays and festivities. Working creatively in a team lay at the very heart of the theatre workshop. In 1923, the artist and sculptor

Oskar Schlemmer took over the Bauhaus theatre in Weimar from Lothar Schreyer. Under Schlemmer, the theatre enjoyed a string of remarkable successes. He also involved students from different Bauhaus workshops in his various theatre projects. Schlemmer's most renowned project is probably the Triadic Ballet, performed in the Deutsches Nationaltheater in Weimar in the summer of 1923 as part of the major Bauhaus exhibition. Schlemmer designed abstract geometrical costumes for the dancers, setting new benchmarks in stagecraft. By the way, Eberhard Schrammen was also inspired by this style of costume for his unusual puppets which are displayed on the shelf.

Publicity / 1923 Bauhaus Exhibition

616: Postcard series, 1923

These postcards are sheer self-promotion. They belong to a total of 20 images created together with posters and other advertising for the major Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar in 1923. Around 40,000 copies of the postcards were printed. They were sent all over the world to advertise for the exhibition - probably the first art mailing campaign ever, and something completely new at the time! Bauhaus students designed twelve of the postcards. The other eight

postcards were produced by some of the famous Bauhaus teachers - and the designs by Paul Klee and Oskar Schlemmer are here on the left. This campaign also illustrates the focus on teamwork, so much at the heart of the Bauhaus. This was especially true of the Bauhaus exhibition. To learn more about this major achievement - one of the creative highpoints of the Bauhaus in Weimar - just key in 66.

The 1923 exhibition showcased the Bauhaus in Weimar. This crucial event was a window on the Bauhaus – and that's why it's so fascinating for us today. In 1922, Walter Gropius was coming under pressure from the Thuringian ministry of education and cultural affairs. The Bauhaus was state subsidised – and the ministry wanted the public to see the innovations being developed. But there was another reason too. German nationalists regarded the new Bauhaus educational concept as close to communism, and the exhibition was also intended to take the wind out of their sails. Gropius and his teaching staff felt it was too early to stage an exhibition. But Gropius was well aware of the benefits of showing the Bauhaus to a wider public. It also gave him a chance to review the Bauhaus approach internally, regroup and set new goals. After all, the exhibition came at a crucial point – just when the Bauhaus was turning away from handcrafted individual pieces to develop prototypes for industrial production. For twelve months, the Bau-

haus staff and students focused their joint efforts on preparing the exhibition. In summer 1923, the great moment came. At different locations in Weimar, Bauhaus presented its different facets to the public. Workshop products were on show and on sale, works from the preliminary course were displayed together with other art works, and lectures and theatre performances were given. In a parallel event, the Bauhaus organised the first international exhibition of modernist architecture with works by Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. Bauhaus contributed its extensive records from Gropius's own architectural practice and the *Haus am Horn* house with its complete interior furnishings – and, by the way, the house is still open to the public today. Although the 1923 Weimar exhibition was not a financial success, it certainly put Bauhaus on the map, both within Germany and abroad. From then on, the Bauhaus enjoyed a worldwide reputation!

Student Art Works

617: Kurt Schmidt, Form and Colour Organ with Moving Colour Tones

Kurt Schmidt entitled this 1923 wooden relief the "Form and Colour Organ with Moving Colour Tones". And why? To find out you only have to walk past the painting. Go slowly past it from right to left. Can you see what happens? The warm red-yellow colours change to cooler blues, greens and purples – and if you walk back, the effect reverses. So what you see is just what the title promises – moving colour tones. The black, white and grey surfaces mediate between the two colour tones. This playful approach to colour and shape is a good example of how creative the students also were in areas other than product development and design. Officially, art was not taught at the Weimar Bauhaus as an independent subject. Nonetheless – or perhaps precisely for that reason – most Bauhaus students also experimented with art alongside their official training. They were certainly encouraged by the Bauhaus

Masters, and in particular by such *Meister der Form* as Paul Klee or Wassily Kandinsky. Both Klee and Kandinsky had trained in the fine arts and advocated different approaches to art. Kurt Schmidt's "Form and colour organ" is influenced by the Dutch De Stijl movement. At that time, it was calling for a radical form of visual art based on stringent geometric forms. In 1922, Theo van Doesburg, one of the founders of the De Stijl group, offered a De Stijl course in Weimar. It was attended by many of the Bauhaus students. Van Doesburg may have been hoping to be appointed at the Bauhaus, but Gropius found the formal rules applied by the De Stijl artists too onesided and inflexible. He wanted to encourage diversity and openness – so when Johannes Itten resigned from the Bauhaus in 1923, he invited Lázló Moholy-Nagy, a prodigious multi-talented artist, to join him in Weimar.

Toys

618: Alma Siedhoff-Buscher, Ball Toy, 1923/24



Siedhoff-Buscher, Alma: Kugelspiel, 1923/24
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

The *Kugelspiel* or ball toy³ is one of the Bauhaus's most creative achievements. It encourages children to find objects – from sticks in the woods to yarn from a sewing box – and use the pins or dowels to turn the coloured balls and wooden blocks into ever new versions of fantasy animals, figures or vehicles. The ball toy was designed by Alma Siedhoff-Buscher, one of the most innovative women at the Weimar Bauhaus – and one of the most determined. When she started there in 1922, she had to join the weaving workshop – as did most women at the Bauhaus. But she felt out of place and asked Walter Gropius to let her transfer to the woodcarving workshop. Her designs convinced the Council of Masters to let her change and her request was granted. Alma Siedhoff-Buscher was pas-

sionately interested in designing for children. She worked on children's designs throughout her life, creating everything from furniture and toys to puppet theatres, building blocks and activity sheets. Her first large project was decorating the children's room in the *Haus Am Horn* for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition. There, she proved her ability to radically rethink traditional forms and functions. Her cupboard is not just a cupboard. In no time, it easily converts into a stage for puppet shows. In her view, children can – and should – take an active part in deciding and shaping what they do. Alma Siedhoff-Buscher was convinced that:

*"...children should have a room where they can be what they want to, where they are in control. Everything in it belongs to them, and they can shape it with their own-
imagination..."*

In this spirit, her ti 24 play cabinet offered a multifunctional play landscape. Alma Siedhoff-Buscher applied the same principle to the ball toy, developed specifically for free play. There are no rules on how to use the different wooden elements and it's not intended to create any one definite outcome. Alma Siedhoff-Buscher's open educational approach was quite new in those days – and well ahead of its time.

Toys

619: Alma Siedhoff-Buscher, Action Doll, around 1924



Siedhoff-Buscher, Alma: Wurfuppe, around 1924
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

This ingenious doll is a real highlight of the Bauhaus in Weimar. It is the only Bauhaus product ever registered with the German Imperial Patent Office. Surprisingly, perhaps, none of the other prototypes from the Bauhaus workshops were granted a patent – and such a patent was much prized since it officially stamped the product as highly innovative. The doll was designed by Alma Siedhoff-Buscher. She was one of the leading creative women at the Bauhaus and designed a wide range of toys and children's furniture. But why was

this doll so innovative – and why was it given a patent? The answer lies in its new interactive approach. While children usually played alone with traditional dolls, the action doll invites children to throw it to each other. And not only does it encourage children to play together, it also trains their motoric abilities and perceptive faculties. Moreover, if the doll falls down, it always looks different when it lands. Since the doll would be more or less roughly thrown around, the material and workmanship needed to be especially robust. Alma Siedhoff-Buscher made the body out of raffia. The head, hands and feet are from lathe-turned wooded beads, and the clothing is crocheted yarn. This functionality also impressed the Imperial Patent Office. The patent specification in April 1926 commented:

"The new doll is especially notable for being hardwearing and flexible."

But the action doll was not a money-spinner – as a handmade article, it was simply too elaborate to produce.

Precursor - Successor

620: Three chairs: Henry van de Velde, Marcel Breuer, Erich Dieckmann



Van de Velde, Henry: Stuhl
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

These three chairs illustrate different aspects of the Bauhaus in Weimar. They show that the Bauhaus did not entirely start from scratch when it opened in 1919 and illustrate how its impact continued in Weimar even after the Bauhaus moved to Dessau in 1925. The chair on the left symbolises Bauhaus's predecessor in Weimar – Henry van de Velde's School of Arts and Applied Arts. Henry van de Velde, a renowned Belgian art nouveau artist, was already training students in workshops

there, and developing prototypes for serial production. The planks of the seats were screwed together in a completely new way – one that also represents the transition from craft skills to industrial technologies. The chair in the centre was designed by Marcel Breuer, one of the best-known furniture designers from the Weimar Bauhaus. Here, in the characteristic Bauhaus style, the traditional chair has been reconceptualised to make it functional and able to be produced in series. Breuer's design achieves these aims by using the same width of board for the arm rests, feet and back - only their length is different. It was also innovative to replace the standard upholstery seat with canvas, using material developed in the Bauhaus weaving workshop. Finally, the chair on the right represents the direct successor to the Bauhaus in Weimar - the State Academy of Crafts and Architecture. This college was headed by Otto Bartning until the Nazis forced it to close in 1930. The light and comfortable chair further develops the Bauhaus ideas. The chair was made by Erich Dieckmann, the head of the interior design workshop at the new college. Dieckmann belonged to that highly talented generation of Bauhaus students who graduated just before the Bauhaus moved to Dessau. Many of the Bauhaus graduates found their first jobs as teachers in leading educational institutions. In this way, they spread the Bauhaus ideas and ideals around the world.

Politics

621: Walter Gropius, Monument to the March Dead, 1922



Gropius, Walter: Modell zum Märzgefallenendenkmal, 1922 © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2012

In March 1922, Walter Gropius personally oversaw the construction of his Monument to the March Dead on the main cemetery in Weimar. Gropius's design, which you see on the pages here, won the competition organised by a local federation of trade unions. Other Weimar artists and Bauhaus colleagues had also taken part. The memorial was designed to honour the workers killed during demonstrations in Weimar against the 1920 Kapp Putsch. This attempted right-wing coup against the newly founded Weimar Republic resulted in numerous deaths across Germany. The leaflet on the left shows the monument where the people killed in Weimar were buried. The

monument's zigzag upward movement is reminiscent of expressionist works. The plaster model of the monument, created in 1921 in the Bauhaus sculpture workshop, is on show in the foyer. Gropius called his monument a

"lightning bolt rising from the bottom of the grave to symbolise the living spirit".

During the 1930s, the monument was destroyed by the Nazis. It was rebuilt in the same place in 1946 and can still be seen there today. With his Monument to the March Dead, Walter Gropius was making the kind of political statement that he otherwise strictly avoided in his role as Bauhaus director. In 1919, he even issued a written ban on political activities at the Bauhaus. You can see the ban in the display case to the left. Gropius issued the ban to send a clear signal to the world: Bauhaus was not political. It was a state-funded university and not a left-wing elite training centre, as many thought at that time. But in the long run, Gropius's efforts at political neutrality were of little use. When the conservative and reactionary forces gained a majority in the Thuringian state parliament in 1925, Bauhaus had to leave Weimar.

Bauhaus sites in Weimar

622: Map in the foyer

The Bauhaus Museum is not the only place in Weimar where you can explore the Bauhaus cultural legacy. This map shows you the other Bauhaus sites in Weimar. You can find another object associated with the Bauhaus directly opposite the Deutsches Nationaltheater - a bronze panel by Walter Gropius. The inscription recalls how delegates met in this theatre in 1919 to draft and approve Germany's first democratic constitution, the foundation stone of the Weimar Republic. It was rare for Gropius to make such a public political statement. His only other clearly political statement was his Monument to the March Dead on the main cemetery in Weimar – marked here at the bottom left. On the right above it, you can see today's Bauhaus University, which proudly bears the name of its famous predecessor. It is housed in buildings that were once home to the Bauhaus, and visitors there can still see the Director's Room with its original furnishings, where Gropius had his office, as well as a number of murals from the Bauhaus period. The

university buildings were designed by Henry van de Velde, the great pioneer who paved the way for the Bauhaus in Weimar. Since 1996, the university buildings have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The World Heritage List also includes the *Haus am Horn* – further to the right here, beyond the Ilm Park. The *Haus am Horn* is the only building that was constructed by the Bauhaus in Weimar. Below it, you can see the *Hohe Pappeln* house designed by Henry van de Velde for himself and his family. That house is also open to visitors, as is the Nietzsche Archive, on the far left here. Van der Velde also redesigned the archive's interior rooms. There is a lot more to discover on the Bauhaus trail in Weimar. We hope you enjoy exploring the Bauhaus cultural legacy. This is where we leave you on this tour. We hope you found our tour of the Bauhaus Museum both interesting and informative. Good-bye – and have a pleasant day!