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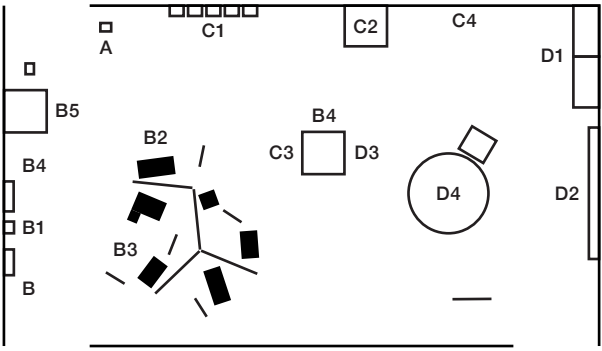


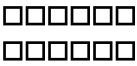

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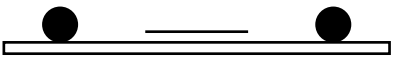

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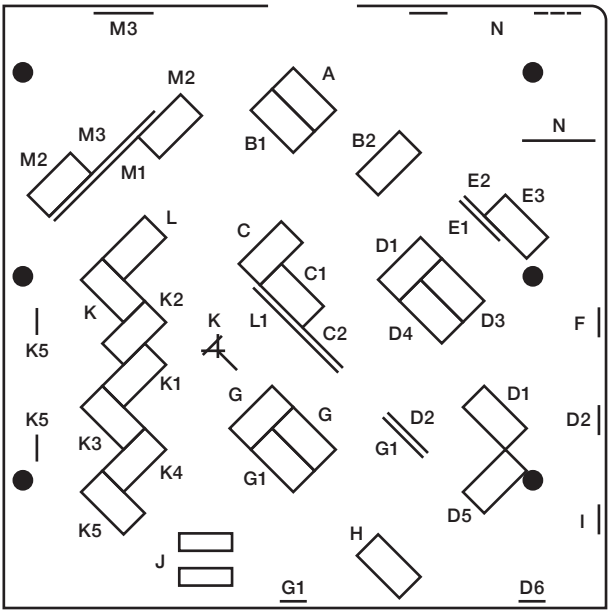


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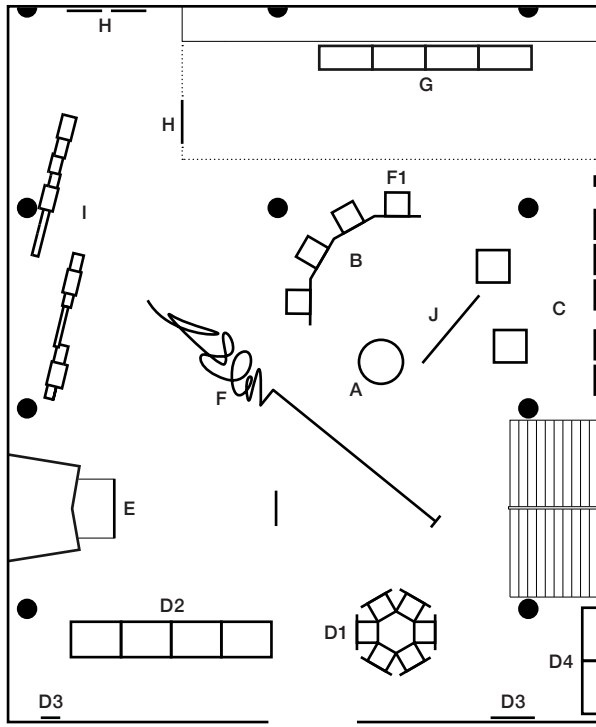


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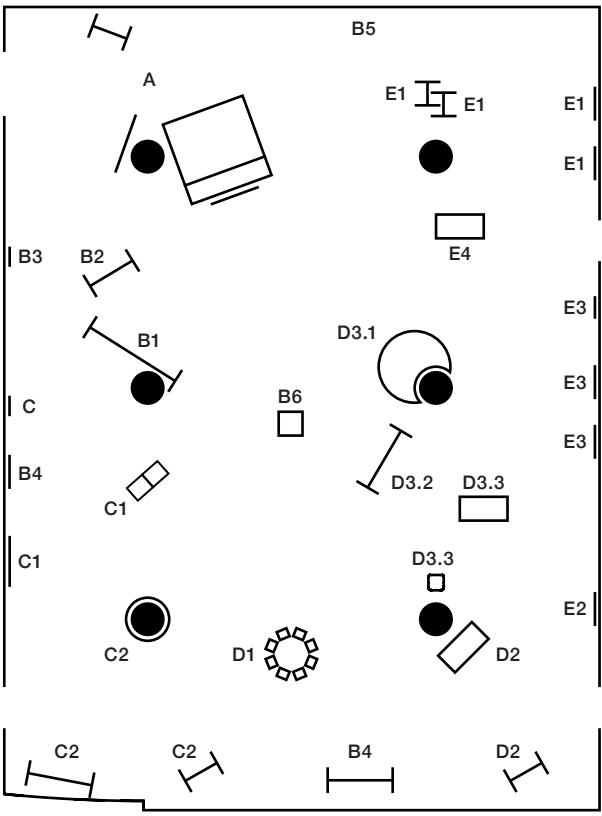


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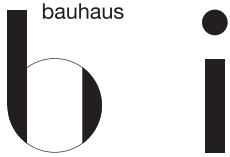

HKW
Haus der Kulturen der Welt

# Foreword

The Bauhaus was established at a time of geopolitical crises and upheaval. With the First World War, the "barbaric" found its way into the center of supposed civilization. The self-destruction of Europe also delegitimized its institutions, in particular the cultural institutions. Furthermore, the technological and industrial revolution confronted society with fundamental transformations.

In this existential crisis, shaped also by the German Revolution and the fragile beginnings of the Weimar Republic, the Bauhaus founders of 1919 sought alternative routes and took new approaches to thinking and production processes. The contemporary relevance of the Bauhaus is essentially due to the fact that today's world is likewise shaped by profound transformations, is accompanied by a similar existential crisis, and similarly faces new political challenges.

The answer of the Bauhaus protagonists was the founding of a school, which from the very beginning had a cosmopolitan character while also drawing on the European tradition of the Gothic guild of masons. The orientation of the Bauhaus initially resulted in an influx of international students, which led to the school forging contacts in many parts of the world. However, from the very beginning, it also meant that the Bauhaus was a thorn in the side of the German nationalists.

The attack from the right wing placed the Bauhaus under increasing pressure during the 1920s, forcing it first to leave Weimar, and then Dessau, only for the Berlin school to close for good in 1933. At the same time, this political pressure defined the framework within which the Bauhaus, since its founding, grappled with all the different positions in order to establish a socially relevant approach to design. It was precisely this development that enabled the Bauhaus to establish itself internationally following its expulsion from Germany by the National Socialists.

The second part of the answer to Europe's existential crisis, and in particular that of the Wilhelminian authoritarian state, was developed out of the workshop idea of the Gothic guild of masons. The aim of the new institution was to bring about social change through transformation of the material world by means of handicraft and design.

*bauhaus imaginista* grasps these two aspects of the Bauhaus as part of a modern era that drew its impulses and ideas from transcultural exchanges and encounters. Consequently, the international research and exhibition project does not portray the international impact of the Bauhaus a century after its founding as a narrative of the transfer of ideas from Germany to the rest of the world, nor does it take the iconic Bauhaus as its starting point. Instead, it begins with four areas of research—lines of inquiry with which to explore the legacy of the Bauhaus from the perspective of the challenges that face the world today.

In the chapter *Corresponding With*, a parallel is drawn between the Bauhaus Manifesto of Walter Gropius and the art and design schools that were founded in Asia around the same time as the Bauhaus, and which likewise became hubs for social change. *Learning From* begins with Paul Klee's drawing of a North African carpet (*Teppich*) and explores learning processes, appropriations, and the resulting syntheses of objects, ranging from premodern craft to modern design. Marcel Breuer's collage, *ein bauhaus-film,* updates design history in an unknown future and, in *Moving Away*, turns the focus of research into a modern approach that sees design as a tool for improving everyday life. Last but not least, *Still Undead* upends the postmodern critique of the Bauhaus, with a revival of Kurt Schwerdtfeger's *Reflektorische Farblichtspiele* (Reflecting color-light plays) serving as an impulse for emancipatory pop and subcultures.

Our existence today, like that of the Bauhauslers, is a global one. It thrives on exchanges and encounters, but also on the conflicts and upheavals that a world in motion elicits, and that once again influence the zeitgeist. *bauhaus imaginista* envisions this controversial search for cultural articulations under the circumstances of the ongoing separation of cultural artefacts and ideas from their local contexts and their relocation and transformation into new

constellations. In this sense, the different and far-flung iterations of the Bauhaus become resources that help us to understand and shape the problematic twenty-first century.

With this shared interest, the Bauhaus Kooperation Berlin Dessau Weimar, the Goethe-Institut, and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) decided to join forces. Since 2018, in the scope of the Bauhaus centenary 2019, *bauhaus imaginista* has been realized in eight locations on four continents through exhibitions, symposiums, archive tours, and accompanying publications and is now being shown within the framework of *100 Years of Now* at HKW in Berlin.

We would like to thank the Goethe-Instituts in Shanghai, Peking, New Delhi, Lagos, Moscow, New York, Rabat, São Paulo, and Tokyo, as well as Le Cube—Independent Art Room, Rabat; the China Design Museum, Hangzhou; the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; and the SESC Pompéia, São Paulo, for their excellent cooperation. *bauhaus imaginista* was generously supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the German Federal Cultural Foundation, and the Federal Foreign Office.

We would also like to congratulate the curators Marion von Osten and Grant Watson—who developed *bauhaus imaginista* with a team of international researchers, artists, and designers—on their challenging concept and the successful realization of the whole project.

Claudia Perren
Bauhaus Kooperation

Bernd Scherer
HKW

Johannes Ebert
Goethe-Institut

# Introduction

Today, in the twenty-first century, the question remains of how to reimagine the relationship between the arts and society. The need to radicalize art education as part of this question ran through the twentieth century, and when thinking about the historical Bauhaus an example of radical pedagogy immediately appears. Established in 1919 in Weimar as a new model of a design school in the immediate aftermath of the First World War and the German Revolution, the Bauhaus brought together a younger generation of artists and architects who rejected the nationalistic, militaristic, and authoritarian past and insisted on the social relevance of the arts in an emerging democratic society. Helping to shape this radical imagination for new practices, new forms of learning, and new lifestyles was the idea that the individual and the material environment should be freed from all that was unnecessary and that the relationship between the arts, craft, design, and the building should be rethought. In the light of the Bauhaus school's centenary, from a contemporary perspective, how can we reimagine the production of design and culture as a social project, and invent the kinds of institutions and practices that we need today?

From its inception, the Bauhaus was internationally oriented; students and teachers travelled from different parts of Europe and Asia to become part of the school. As curators of the *bauhaus imaginista* project we understand

the global circulation of Bauhaus ideas not in terms of impact, but rather through its participation in international networks prior to 1933 and how this was mirrored in the school's afterlife. The school itself was heterogeneous, and at different times took ideas from the British Arts and Crafts movement, socialism and communism, as well as spiritualist and esoteric concepts. It had links both to revolutionary Soviet constructivism and the Netherlands-based De Stijl, and its members participated in movements such as the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). Heterogeneity contributed to the success of the Bauhaus, but this diversity also produced contradictions and conflict. There were discrepancies in its utopianism; for example, despite steps toward women's emancipation, gender hierarchies and stereotypes persisted at the Bauhaus, and tensions between art and design education, between learning and commercial production, between egalitarian aspirations and a largely upper middle-class clientele for its products went unresolved. Ultimately, this complexity mitigates against any canonical reading of the Bauhaus or attempt to reduce it to a single style, something that has been reflected in our approach.

The vision of the Bauhaus according to Walter Gropius—the school's first director from 1919 to 1928—constituted a break with classical and academic training, including its separation between the fine and applied arts. This revision was equally important in other parts of the world where decolonizing education meant doing away with the arts/crafts hierarchies often imposed through European colonization. Gropius believed that experimental and artistic research could intervene in the conditions of mass production. Hence, the *Vorkurs* (preliminary course) introduced formal and material studies, which fed into the workshops and eventually through to collaborations with industry. Under its second director, Hannes Meyer (1928–30), a more collectivist and egalitarian, but also more polytechnic-style approach to teaching took hold. This included research on the exploration of the spatial, topographical, and societal underpinning of architectural projects, which were also infused by international ideas of new cooperative housing developments and urban planning. In its final phase, the Bauhaus took the form of an architecture school under the directorship of the architect Mies van der Rohe (1930–33). The Bauhaus, in all its different phases from 1919 to 1933, consistently remained a school for practitioners led by practitioners based in material experimentation, in contrast to the privileging of the cognitive over practical and manual skills today.

The rise of the right wing forced the Bauhaus to move from Weimar to Dessau in 1925 and to Berlin in 1932, before the National Socialists seized control and perpetrated their violence through the state apparatus. The Bauhaus disbanded autonomously in 1933 rather than provide the

Nazis the opportunity to close the school down. Consequently, as many international students and masters fled Germany to settle in different parts of the world, the ideas of the Bauhaus radiated out to many different nations and cultures. It is this transmission of knowledge that *bauhaus imaginista* follows: a transfer via migration of students and teachers, but also via the interpretation, appropriation, and imagination of diverse Bauhaus ideas, in China, North Korea, India, the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Nigeria, Morocco, and Brazil.

The multiyear research (2016–19), which *bauhaus imaginista* was able to gather in collaboration with international researchers and cultural producers from Brazil, China, India, Japan, Morocco, Nigeria, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, shows to what extent and under which local conditions new design ideas and Bauhaus pedagogy were taken up and developed further. In this way, the project opens up a perspective on a transnational history of modernist art and design, marked by wars and dictatorships, non-aligned movements, the Cold War, and the processes of decolonization. *bauhaus imaginista* traces the history of a twentieth-century transcultural exchange from the perspective of international correspondence, relationships, encounters, and resonances. Putting this approach into practice in 2018, over the course of a year, *bauhaus imaginista* has realized a series of transnational exhibitions and events with international partners: Le Cube—Independent Art Room, Rabat; the China Design Museum, Hangzhou; the Goethe-Institut and partners in New York, the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; the SESC Pompéia, São Paulo; the University of Ife, Ile-Ife, and University of Lagos; and the Kiran Nadar Museum, New Delhi, as well as the Goethe-Instituts in each location. Important elements of the results will be on show in Berlin and Bern in 2019.

The anniversary exhibition at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) is divided into four chapters. Each chapter departs from a focal object selected from Bauhaus masters and students. What these four objects have in common is their propositional character and their material ephemerality. They include a copy of the Bauhaus Manifesto and first curriculum by Walter Gropius of 1919, the drawing *Teppich* (Carpet) by Paul Klee of 1927, the collage *ein bauhaus-film* by Marcel Breuer of 1926, and the "Reflecting color-light plays" by Kurt Schwerdtfeger of 1922.

These four objects pose questions that are still vital today. Yet, while our curatorial approach has been to decipher these objects in relation to their own historical specificity, we have also sought to make sense of what they suggest going forward as a genealogy of forms, practices, and concepts. Each

chapter in the exhibition features historical and archival material, but through our research we have tried not only to explore the international reception of the Bauhaus in the twentieth century, but also to understand the stakes of each chapter, its themes and ideas, in terms of a contemporary politics. The question of the contemporary emerges in particular through the artist commissions, through discursive events, but also, we hope, in the reflections and responses of the audience.

Chapter 1, *Corresponding With,* departs from the Bauhaus Manifesto of 1919 to explore early twentieth-century art and design pedagogy at the Bauhaus and at two other connected schools: Kala Bhavan, established in 1919 by Rabindranath Tagore in India, and Seikatsu Kōsei Kenkyūsho (Research Institute for Life Design), established by Renshichirō Kawakita in Japan in 1931, from which later emerged the Shin Kenchiku Kōgei Gakuin (School of New Architecture and Design). These three avant-garde institutions participated in cosmopolitan networks and variously navigated the tensions between internationalism, nationalism, colonial rule, and the rise of fascism.

This chapter points toward the possibility of a radicalization in art, design, and pedagogy to shape the semiotic values embedded in material cultures and to remove this from a reactionary ethos. By looking to historical examples, it becomes possible to consider how institutions today, including schools of art and design, can imagine new ways of living that respond to patriarchal, xenophobic, and nationalist pressures.

Chapter 2, *Learning From*, takes Klee's drawing of a North African carpet to reflect on the modernist appropriation of art outside the European mainstream. It includes the revival of local knowledge of crafts in post-independence Morocco at the École des Beaux Arts (School of Fine Arts) in Casablanca, the influence of pre-Columbian textiles on Bauhaus émigrés to the Unites States, and figures such as architect Lina Bo Bardi, who embraced the Bauhaus as well as popular culture to redefine Brazilian modernism.

This chapter encourages audiences to consider the value of "learning from" alongside questions concerning the asymmetrical power relations present in cultural appropriation, the blind spots in histories of collecting, as well as arguments for reparation. It explores the powerful dislocation of meaning which occurs when materials are decontextualized and how, simultaneously, indigenous groups experience the destruction of their culture and environment.

Chapter 3, *Moving Away,* takes the evolution of the chair in Breuer's collage to trace the transformation of Bauhaus design and architecture in response to societal and geopolitical change. From the modernization of the USSR, to

post-independence India, to campus projects in Nigeria, there is pressure for architecture and design to adapt. Former Bauhaus directors Hannes Meyer and Walter Gropius had to update their own concepts, while courses at the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design), Ulm, and at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad both take up and leave behind certain Bauhaus ideas.

This chapter looks at how, during the twentieth century, the modernist plan conceived between architects, designers, and the state served both progressive and repressive ends. The subsequent critique of planning and state intervention, along with privatization and deregulation of the public domain, has weakened our collective response to the present crisis of social and economic inequality and the growing threat of climate change. This suggests the urgent need to regain the power to plan collectively in the interests of the common good.

Chapter 4, *Still Undead,* was realized together with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt. It tells the story of light- and sound experiments; starting with Schwerdtfeger's *Reflektorische Farblichtspiele* (Reflecting color-light plays) at a Bauhaus party in 1922. These kinds of experiments were developed further subsequently by László Moholy-Nagy at the New Bauhaus (later named the Institute of Design, IIT) in Chicago and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) by his colleague György Kepes. Such experiments transgressed the boundaries of academia, entering the world of pop culture via electronic music and strobe lighting. Through works from the United States, Great Britain, and postwar West Germany up to the present, *Still Undead* shows how countercultural productions can emerge from and transgress institutional structures only to be re-assimilated.

This chapter addresses the overlapping territories of artistic surplus, hedonism, micropolitics, self-fashioning, and commerce. It questions how in a neoliberal economy a re-politicization of art, technology, and popular culture can be conceived. Can the creative energy exemplified by art schools, and its surplus beyond the curriculum, be oriented towards political ends, including anti-fascism and the queering of norms, to avoid being subsumed by commodity culture and the entertainment industry?

This international research project could be realized only by working intensively for a number of years with academics and art practitioners from Brazil, Chile, China, Germany, France, India, Israel, Japan, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Russia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. We are extremely grateful to these researchers, designers, and artists for their generosity and for sharing their ideas with us. We would also like to acknowledge the support received

from the committed project teams in Berlin and international partner institutions, as well as the initiators of this project: the Bauhaus Kooperation Berlin Dessau Weimar, the Goethe-Institute, and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt. Finally, as this is the first large-scale project of its kind—one that leaves Western historiography of the Bauhaus behind—we propose this exhibition as a point of departure: as an experiment in a dialogical, transdisciplinary, and transhistorical narrative comprising the potential to germinate future study, reflection, and imagination.

Marion von Osten & Grant Watson

Corresponding With

# Introduction

*Corresponding With* begins with the 1919 Bauhaus Manifesto published by Walter Gropius, who argued that in the future there should be "no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman." The Manifesto was of its time, drawing on a radical cultural movement that wanted to overcome existing European academic art education, and which understood the social and material value of craft to redress the alienation and destruction of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism. The Bauhaus school was, from its inception, at the confluence of international ideas on modernism and radical educational reforms, rethinking the relationship between the applied and non-applied arts and manual and cognitive knowledge. As a pedagogical experiment, it was exceptional in putting various ideas and practices into new curricula and rethinking the role of the arts in the creation of a new socialist and democratic society.

The Bauhaus opened in April 1919 in the same year the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore opened the art school Kala Bhavan at Santiniketan, an already existing utopian community on a piece of land 100 miles north of Calcutta (today: Kolkata). Like the early Bauhaus, Kala Bhavan developed a modernist language while referring to resources from Indian traditions, as well as, for example, the British Arts and Crafts movement. In 1922, the Austrian art historian Stella Kramrisch, who taught at Kala Bhavan, wrote a letter to Johannes Itten in which she pursued the possibility of a Bauhaus exhibition in India. This exchange of correspondence resulted in the first international Bauhaus show, which took place at the Indian Society of Oriental Art in Kolkata in December of that year.

Another Bauhaus-related educational experiment—Seikatsu Kōsei Kenkyūsho (Research Institute for Life Design)—was founded by Renshichirō Kawakita in Tokyo in 1931 and later renamed Shin Kenchiku Kōgei Gakuin (School of New Architecture and Design). Like the Bauhaus in Weimar, the Tokyo school combined modernist crafts and industrial forms of production with Japanese ideas of aesthetics. In 1934 Kawakita published (with Katsuō Takei) a book on Kōsei education, *Kōsei Kyōiku Taikei* (Handbook for

Design Education), which worked alongside the school to transform specific Bauhaus principles into a new, modernist Japanese art educational theory.

The exhibition *Corresponding With* compares the practice and philosophy of these three schools, linked by letters, ideas, and the movement of people and works. It contains rarely seen documents on teaching methods and workshop environments, aesthetic vocabularies and material cultures, the content of courses, the outcome of workshops on everyday objects (crafted in accordance with the school's guiding principles), and writings on pedagogy. The three schools—considered in relation to one another and rethought in terms of early twentieth-century art education as part of transnational and transcultural exchange—shared a critique of European academic art education and the desire to reshape society through radical pedagogy, distancing themselves from rising nationalisms.

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Ordhendra Coomar Gangoly
Albert Gleizes
Walter Gropius
Asit Halder
Gertrud Hantschk
Sutemi Horiguchi
*I SEE ALL*
Wassily Kandinsky
Surendranath Kar
Renshichirō Kawakita
*Kenchiku Kigen*
Paul Klee
Stella Kramrisch
Kazimir Malevich
Adolf Meyer
Sandhya Mitra
*Mizue*
Takehiko Mizutani
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Piet Mondrian
Benode Behari Mukherjee
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*The New Art in Europe*
The Otolith Group
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Margaretha Reichardt
Oskar Schlemmer
Kiyoshi Seike
Arieh Sharon
K.G. Subramanyan
Rabindranath Tagore
Rathindranath Tagore
Katsuō Takei
Iwao Yamawaki
Michiko Yamawaki

A
Gegenstand

Walter Gropius,
Bauhaus Manifesto,
1919

Walter Gropius published the Bauhaus Manifesto in 1919 as a handout to promote the newly founded Bauhaus school in Weimar to future students. Printed on four pages, it includes a woodcut print—an expressionist depiction of a cathedral by Lyonel Feininger—on a spread facing the general aims and curriculum. The text of the Manifesto itself looks backward and forward. It argues for a future where there is "no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman" and states that the goal of the arts is to reunite in the creation of the building. The name Bauhaus referred to the medieval guilds *(Bauhütte),* and Feininger's choice of a Gothic cathedral motif for a woodcut, when photography and mass-printing techniques were commonplace, emphasized a handmade ethos. The claim to "return to the crafts" is rooted in the British Arts and Crafts movement, which understood manufacture and craft production as means to redress the alienation and destruction of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism. The title of the woodcut, which is sometimes referred to as *Kathedrale des Sozialismus,* points to the political context. Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius had founded the Arbeitsrat für Kunst (Workers Council for Art) in postwar revolutionary Berlin in 1918, where they were publishing blueprints of the Manifesto including woodcut prints by Feininger. According to their vision, art and the life of the people would need to form a new unity, a reachable goal, spurred on by a new building culture movement. The Bauhaus Manifesto is the first manifesto of the twentieth century by an architect. Still, the cathedral-cum-crystal motif points to millenarian spiritual currents as well, which were infused into the early Bauhaus school in Weimar along with its socialist ideals.

*Kathedrale* (Cathedral)
Lyonel Feininger, April 1919

Cover of the Bauhaus
Manifesto and Program
Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin
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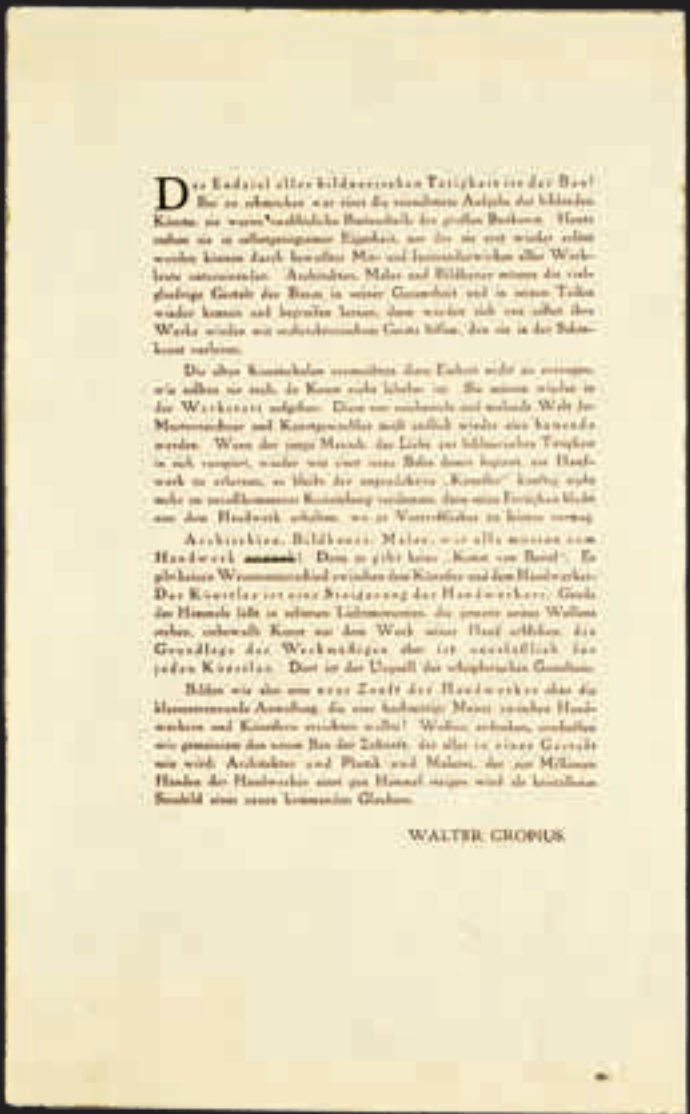
Photograph: Atelier Schneider



Bauhaus Manifesto
Walter Gropius, April 1919

Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin
Photograph: Markus Hawlik

B

## Shin Kenchiku Kōgei Gakuin (School of New Architecture And Design), Tokyo, 1932–1939

The little-known, but highly influential educational experiment Seikatsu Kōsei Kenkyūsho (Research Institute for Life Design) was founded by Japanese architect and journalist Renshichirō Kawakita in Tokyo in 1931. Kawakita was a close friend to the three Japanese architects and educators who were the first Japanese Bauhaus students to study at the Dessau school—Takehiko Mizutani, and Michiko and Iwao Yamawaki. Both Mizutani and Kawakita understood the Bauhaus, not as a design style, but rather as an effort to renew art education collectively, and they collaborated on an experimental Bauhaus–Japan exhibition held at the Tokyo Art Academy in 1931. In 1932, the Research Institute for Life Design became a private school with the name Shin Kenchiku Kōgei Gakuin (School of New Architecture and Design). The curriculum of this school was established through a close examination of the pedagogical approach of the Bauhaus and Japanese modernisms. It included a preliminary course as well as classes in the artisan trades, painting, works in paper, and textiles, in addition to fashion and the performing arts. The school held workshops in craft disciplines in Tokyo, which provided new methods for design and learning with the material, primarily in the spirit of constructivism. At its height, former Bauhaus students taught at the school, among them were Iwao and Michiko Yamawaki, who, following their time spent at the Bauhaus, brought with them their own interpretation of the curriculum in Dessau as well as photographic documents and works. Kawakita's school had to close when the Japanese Ministry of Education refused to renew its license and it was no longer able to withstand the rising climate of nationalism and militarism. Although the school only existed for a few years, it influenced numerous Japanese designers such as graphic designer Yusaku Kamekura and fashion designer Yōko Kuwasawa, who founded their own design school following the Second World War, which Walter Gropius visited.

**Renshichirō Kawakita Teaching his Course "Theory of Education for Thinking through Construction," Wakayama City, 1932**

in: *Kenchiku Kōgei: I SEE ALL*
(Architecture and Crafts: I SEE ALL),
p. 36, March 1933

B1

## *I SEE ALL,* 1931–1936: The Bauhaus in Japanese Magazines

Renshichirō Kawakita followed the developments of the Bauhaus through reading texts, magazines, and the Bauhaus books. Furthermore, he was in close contact with Sadanosuke Nakada and Takehiko Mizutani, both of whom had associations with the Bauhaus during different phases of the school. Kawakita regularly published articles about the Bauhaus in *New Wave of Architecture.* The most important organ for the dissemination of the ideas of the Bauhaus was the magazine *Kenchiku Kōgei: I SEE ALL* (Architecture and Crafts: I SEE ALL), which was published by Kawakita in 50 volumes from 1931 to 1936. Within its pages, he also translated original texts from German, as well as texts by the Russian constructivists and the Czech functionalists. This goes to show that Japanese modernism, like that of the Bauhaus, was open to different, international, and socialist ideas.

B2

## *Kōsei* Exhibitions

Renshichirō Kawakita was close friends with a number of Japanese visitors to the Bauhaus in Weimar, among them architects, writers, and teachers such as Wanjiro Won, Kikuji Ishimoto, and Sadanosuke Nakada. Together with one of the first Japanese Bauhaus students Takehiko Mizutani, who returned in 1931, Kawakita developed an experimental Bauhaus exhibition *Seikatsu Kōsei Tenrankai* (Exhibition of Life Design)—a hybrid installation aesthetic which combined the Bauhaus with Japanese modernism—at the Academy of the Arts in Tokyo. Further exhibitions of this kind were produced by Kawakita together with students in 1932 and 1933 at other schools in Tokyo. Mizutani and Kawakita agreed that the Bauhaus was not reducible to one style; instead, it represented the attempt, in a common effort, to renew the teaching of both art and design. In the process of an East–West cultural transfer, and through the development of his own creative teaching methods, Kawakita set out to renew Japanese culture and its understanding of art and life. In the process, he drew on Johannes Itten's engagement with Eastern thought and his teaching approaches, which corresponded with Franz Čižek's ideas on the liberation of the child, as well as seeking to establish links to the Bauhaus master Gertrud Grunow's synesthetic teaching method, as quotes from Kawakita's students testify.

B3

## Luca Frei, *Model for a Pedagogical Vehicle*

Artist Luca Frei has developed a mobile installation that refers to the historical *Seikatsu Kōsei Tenrankai* (Exhibition of Life Design) in Tokyo, established by Renshichirō Kawakita in 1931. *Seikatsu Kōsei* was an exhibition that aimed to introduce Bauhaus ideas and pedagogy to a Japanese audience, by combining the design principles and preliminary course practices of the Bauhaus with material from the Japanese modernist movement and local crafts.

The installation, *Model for a Pedagogical Vehicle*, is both visual and tactile, and approachable on different levels. It contains documentation of the 1931 exhibition and includes reconstructions of paper studies that featured in the show, which have been made by Eric Gjerde. Completing the setting are three-dimensional textile elements arranged on the floor, inspired by diagrams that were displayed on the ceiling in the historic *Seikatsu Kōsei* exhibition.

The display structure refers in part to the set designs of Jikken Kōbō (1951–57), a group of visual artists, musical composers, photographers, and engineers who are emblematic of the reception of the Bauhaus in postwar Japan. In this sense, the installation as a whole can be seen as an attempt to reconnect the distinct approaches to, and influences from, the Bauhausian pedagogy and philosophy prevalent before and after the Second World War.

B4

## *Kōsei Kyōiku Taikei* and Other Teaching Materials

Kawakita and Katsuō Takei published *Kōsei Kyōiku Taikei* (Handbook for Design Education) in 1934. Here, Kawakita documented his pedagogical approaches in a textbook for the renewal of art education in Japan. He sought to reshape Japanese culture and ideas about art and living, including referencing Bauhaus pedagogy, like the *Vorkurs* (preliminary course) and modernist collage techniques. He thus integrated two different Bauhaus educational styles (Itten's expressionist style and Moholy-Nagy's rationalist style) and synthesized them with Japanese design ideas. However, while the term "Kōsei" is equivalent to the English term "design," it does not derive from the design of objects but from the Japanese philosophy

of lifestyle design. The comprehensive handbook presented new methods and teaching material to a broad public. The volume had a sustained impact on art education in Japan.

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B5

Iwao Yamawaki,
*Der Schlag gegen das Bauhaus*, 1932

The relocation of the Bauhaus, from Weimar to Dessau and then Berlin, was a consequence of the strengthening of right-wing political forces in Germany in the 1920s. When an alliance of right-wing forces reached the majority in the Thuringian state parliament, the Bauhaus disbanded as a state school in 1925 and moved to Dessau, where the Social Democratic Party government had expressed an interest in a design school that could aid in developing new ideas for social housing. In 1928, following the building of the Törten housing estate in Dessau, the socialist architect Hannes Meyer replaced Walter Gropius as director. However, two years later, Meyer was dismissed for alleged communist activities by the Mayor of Dessau, Fritz Hesse—the very mayor who had been keen to bring the Bauhaus to Dessau in the first place. Now under the directorship of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the Bauhaus in Dessau closed in the summer of 1932 after the National Socialists gained a majority in the state parliament. Iwao Yamawaki reacted to the closure with a collage that he published in an architecture magazine in Tokyo, at a time when Japan was also under the rule of a nationalist government.

C

## The Bauhaus (1919–1933)

The Bauhaus opened in Weimar in April 1919, shortly after the end of the First World War and the German Revolution in which artists and architects who taught at the Bauhaus had been actively involved. The struggles of 1918 led to the constitution of the Weimar Republic. In the context of emerging democratic societies, radical educational reforms and a mounting critique of nationalism became important in different parts of the world, including Germany. The Bauhaus was driven by ideas of social and political renewal and was at the confluence of ideas, including an interest in reform pedagogy, anthroposophy, twelve-tone music, yoga, the British Arts and Crafts movement, new kindergartens, as well as Asian philosophy. The pedagogical principle of the Bauhaus was less about the individual object than rethinking relations between material culture and new ways of being. Courses by Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee went on to teach the basic principles of *Gestaltung*—form, composition, and design—rather than academic painting. The emphasis on material experimentation was reflected in the *Vorkurs* (preliminary course), and the accentuation on craft took root in Bauhaus workshops. The international orientation of its program also opened up a correspondence between artists, teachers, and students from Europe and Asia. From 1926, the Bauhaus in Dessau, its curriculum and the campus building, stood for new living environments within industrial modernity. Under three directors, Walter Gropius, Hannes Meyer, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the Bauhaus developed its pedagogical approach in different directions but, in all its phases, the school was under threat of closure by right-wing forces. After the dissolution of the Bauhaus school in Dessau in the summer of 1932 following the NSDAP's municipal elections, the Bauhaus masters and students resumed work in October of the same year in an abandoned telephone factory in the Steglitz district of Berlin. Meanwhile, though the school continued to feel the pressure from the National Socialists, the director of the time, Mies van der Rohe, was adamant: It was imperative that the Bauhaus reopened and autonomously disbanded rather than give the Nazis the opportunity to close it down. Thus, in April 1933, shortly after the reopening of the Bauhaus in Berlin, a solemn dissolution ceremony took place in the school's courtyard attended by all the masters and students.

**Studies from Paul Klee's course at the Bauhaus**
**Lena Bergner, 1927–28**

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern

C1

## Bauhaus Teaching

The Bauhaus curriculum manifested a radical new orientation of art and design education after the First World War. In 1922, Gropius proposed a visual scheme representing the educational plan. It still had "building," as a vision to synthesize all art forms, at its center; however, architectural training only became available in 1927. At the beginning of their studies, students received a one-year basic education in the preliminary course. Under the guidance of the *Werkmeister* (a trained craftsperson), students entered the workshops as "apprentices." Artists like Klee and Kandinsky worked as *Formmeister* (masters of form) and introduced basic principles of color and composition, including notions like *Spannung* (tension) or Principle Order. In the 14 years of its existence, the curriculum of the school was constantly reworked and adapted. Technical and formal experiments were widely carried out in the workshops to develop prototypes for industrial production as well. Theoretical instruction in engineering, psychology, sociology, and other subjects was included in Hannes Meyer's teaching program. Thereby the Bauhaus had finally left behind the established models of a school of applied arts or an art academy. In Dessau, the Bauhaus became the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design), Ulm, and consequently the masters were called professors and the graduates received a Bauhaus diploma. Under the third director, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the Bauhaus finally developed into a private School of Architecture.

C2

## *The Vorkurs*

Introduced by Johannes Itten in October 1919, the preliminary course was arguably the backbone of a Bauhaus education—the means to shake off academic strictures and facilitate the holistic development of the individual student. Initially elective, it became the mandatory conduit, which all students had to pass before gaining acceptance at the school. Along with the required study in color and form, the preliminary course established skills later used in the workshops, principally through the experimental exploration of materials without seeking an end result. Itten's concept was to liberate the individual's creative forces. This included gymnastics to wake up the body, followed by exercises in harmonization and rhythm, as well as the components

of expressive drawing and material composition. Following Itten's departure in 1923, other tutors decisively shaped the preliminary course. The constructivist László Moholy-Nagy believed that industrialized and mediatic societies displaced immediate experience, and he introduced the systematic exploration of the optical and haptic senses through textural analysis as well as spatial studies in wood, metal, plastic, and glass. Josef Albers, who like Itten had trained as a teacher and been a student at the Weimar state Bauhaus, worked alongside Moholy-Nagy and then took over completely in 1928. Albers told students that, being poor, they should work with an economy of means, and provided inexpensive materials for their use. Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky, arriving in 1920 and 1922 respectively, put greater emphasis on color theory and form (interspersed with exercises). The preliminary course, and in particular the idea of a foundational training, has gone on to be one of the most tenacious and enduring elements of Bauhaus pedagogy.

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C3

## Bauhaus Bücher

The series of books, published by the Bauhaus between 1925 and 1930, was an important format for the dissemination of its pedagogical and design concepts and facilitated the international reception of its work. Walter Gropius and László Moholy-Nagy published 14 of the around 50 Bauhaus books that were planned, with the volumes distinguished by writings from Bauhaus artists Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, and Wassily Kandinsky. The series was designed to provide a theory and methodology of modernism, with international artists, architects, and theorists of the movement such as Theo van Doesburg, Kazimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, and others commissioned to publish new approaches. The book series not only presented different design areas from architecture and painting, music and literature, through to the sciences, it also situated the Bauhaus in the international modernist movement. László Moholy-Nagy and Lucia Moholy, because of their cooperation with Kurt Wolff and Ernst Rowohlt in Leipzig, were entrusted with the design and production of most of the publications.

C4

## Japanese Students at the Bauhaus

The architect Iwao Yamawaki studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (1921–26) and was involved with the avant-garde artists' group *Tan'i sanka*. While in this group, he met Sadanosuke Nakada, who visited the Bauhaus in Weimar in 1922, and became friends with Takehiko Mizutani who studied in Dessau from 1927. Together, Iwao and Michiko Yamawaki followed Mizutani and travelled to Berlin in 1930.

Here, together with Koreya Senda, a politically active socialist involved in the Berlin underground theater and transgender scene, they cofounded the design studio Tomoe. Like Mizutani, the Yamawakis aimed to study at Hannes Meyer's Bauhaus, but found upon arrival that he had already been dismissed from his position. In Dessau, Michiko Yamawaki chose to educate herself in weaving—under Meyer, women were allowed to study in all the Bauhaus classes—and Iwao Yamawaki, who became well known for his photographic works, started his engagement with this medium.

D

## Kala Bhavan

The poet Rabindranath Tagore founded the Kala Bhavan art school in 1919 at Santiniketan—a utopian community about 100 miles north of Calcutta (today: Kolkata), established in the previous century by the poet's father, Maharishi Debendranath Tagore. Born out of the need to rehabilitate Indian culture after the devastating impact of British colonial rule, the school was conceived as an experiment in education that broke with academic tradition and created a form of rural modernism decoupled from industrial modernization. In synthesizing its distinctive aesthetic, teachers at Kala Bhavan drew from an eclectic range of sources, including India's craft traditions, the Buddhist cave paintings of Ajanta and Ellora, as well as Pan-Asian influences such as Javanese batik and Far Eastern brush-and-ink painting, mostly in scroll formats. Students at the school also studied Western sources, such as the British Arts and Crafts movement as well as the continental European avant-garde, including the Bauhaus. As a result of correspondence between the two schools, work by Bauhaus masters was exhibited in Kolkata in 1922, and Kala Bhavan also maintained a cosmopolitan culture through Tagore's international travels and networks as well as research trips undertaken by artist-teachers, particularly within Asia. One of Kala Bhavan's core principles was the notion that the arts and crafts were integral to community vitality. In keeping with this ethos, murals and sculptures were created across the campus, while craft fairs and festivals of theater, dance, music, and puppetry were regularly held. Equally important was the small-scale manufacture of designs from Kala Bhavan in craft workshops set up to improve the rural economy in nearby Sriniketan. While Kala Bhavan had no formal curriculum, led by the artist Nandalal Bose, a strong educational ethos took root in its first two decades.

**Instructions for Mural Painting**
**Nandalal Bose**
**No date, ca. 1929/30**

Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, India

## D1

## The Bauhaus Calcutta Exhibition

The 14th Annual Exhibition of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta (today: Kolkata), held in 1922, was distinguished by the fact that it included Bauhaus masters shown alongside Indian artists, mostly from the Bengal School. The exhibition represents a remarkable encounter of early twentieth-century transcultural modernism, as well as being the first Bauhaus exhibition held outside Germany. Instrumental to the exhibition was the Austrian art historian Stella Kramrisch, who—invited by Tagore to teach at Kala Bhavan—wrote to Itten asking if an exhibition of Bauhaus works in India would be possible. Scant documentation remains, although one existing text by the critic O. C. Gangoly (reprinted here) takes Wassily Kandinsky as an example to discuss the importance of abstraction as a way to break from the dominant Western classical tradition and to bring about a parity with Eastern art forms.

## D2

## Nandalal Bose: Drawings and Postcards

In 1919, Rabindranath Tagore invited the artist Nandalal Bose to lead the new art school Kala Bhavan, where he became head from 1922 to 1951. While Tagore was against a structured curriculum of the kind proposed by Walter Gropius, through practice and repetition Nandalal shaped the school in its first phase. This meant working alongside Tagore to define a new visual culture, against the imposition of colonialism. One of the habits the artist developed, which took on a pedagogical purpose, was to carry small cards that he would illustrate and post to colleagues. These arrived from all over India, including from Faizpur and Haripur—where he had been designing posters for the Indian National Congress, commissioned by Mahatma Gandhi—as well as further afield: This exhibition contains the drawing of a low bench from China.

These postcards constitute an inventory of visual elements that reflect the rhythms of daily life, including from the environs of Santiniketan, natural forms translated into stylized motifs for designs, studies of animals and birds, folk objects (like those in this exhibition), as well as crafts and decorative elements from architecture. Frequently annotated, they often have a stamp and postmark on

their reverse. The custom of sending postcards spread, as seen in the examples collected by the artist Krishna Reddy, a student of Nandalal in the 1940s. These demonstrate a brilliant range of styles, techniques, and subject matter, reflecting Nandalal's idea that stylistic unity was secondary to a reflexive response to subject and context. A similar observational approach can be seen in the sketches of Indian temple sculpture and seated figures made by Prabhat Mohan Bandyopadhyay who, like Nandalal, was active in the anti-colonial cultural movement.

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D3

## Pedagogical Literature from Kala Bhavan

Unlike the Bauhaus, Kala Bhavan had no written manifesto or curriculum. However, a corpus of writing developed around the school, largely produced by the school's artists and teachers. The academic Partha Mitter, whose own writing has explored the interplay between the struggle against colonialism, modernism, and the cultural avant-garde in India, has selected a group of texts for this exhibition. Mitter's selection of texts, published in a journal format for audiences to read, range from Tagore's reflections on his childhood abhorrence for the normative and disciplinarian teaching methods employed by colonial schools, which provoked his desire to reform education; excerpts from the collected writings of Nandalal Bose that describe his teaching method; practical and theoretical instruction from modernist master Benode Behari Mukherjee; to an example of K. G. Subramanyan's prolific writings on art, aesthetics, pedagogy, and cultural translation.

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D4

## Craft Continuum

Nandalal Bose's belief that the arts should relate to social needs included the regeneration of craft traditions, which, given an equal footing at Santiniketan, were integrated into the teaching at Kala Bhavan. This art/craft continuum went against the division between the fine and applied arts imported by the British and disseminated through the government schools established under colonial rule. The politics of clothing and textiles was present in the Swadeshi movement, which began in the late nineteenth century as part of the struggle for independence and aimed to revive Indian products

and boycott British goods. Nandalal believed that designing everyday objects could divert society's taste away from European imitation, and the craft aesthetic of Santiniketan went on to set the standard for India into the 1950s. Significant in this field were women practitioners, including Nandalal's daughter Jamuna Sen and her associate Sandhya Mitra, whose embroidered kurta is on display here.
A focus on craft production was the remit for the Institute for Rural Reconstruction, established at nearby Sriniketan in 1922, which aimed to connect the village economy to Santiniketan and improve the standard of living. Workshops at Sriniketan were run by traditional craftspeople in weaving, carpet making, pottery, woodwork, leather craft, lacquer work, and bookbinding, with Nandalal and his students frequently collaborating. This exhibition includes a ceramic pot and woodblock-printed khadi sari produced at Sriniketan in the 1930s, as well as replicas of furniture from Tagore's apartment there, designed by his son Rathindranath Tagore following a trip to Japan. Characterized by their fusion of modern, Indian, and Japanese elements, these have strongly influenced the style of furniture at Santiniketan ever since.

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D5

## The Otolith Group: *O Horizon*

The Otolith Group, founded in 2002, consists of Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun, both of whom work as artists, curators, and filmmakers. *O Horizon* is a film created, recorded, and researched by Sagar and Eshun at Kala Bhavan. The school, which was driven by a new approach to education comparable to the Bauhaus—an approach that philosopher Gayatri Spivak calls the *aesthetic education* of the university—drew on resources from local traditions like the Indian forest schools as well as from the continental European avant-garde.

*O Horizon* stages moments from Rabindranath Tagore's extensive environmental pedagogy, alluding to what could be described as a "Tagorean cosmopolitics." Drawing on the theories and practices of dance and song developed by Tagore, as well as the murals, sculpture, painting, and drawing created by artists whose work shaped the ethos of several generations of Indian modernists—*O Horizon* is construc ted as a series of portraits, moods, studies, and sketches that utilize dance, song, music, and recital. The film addresses Tagore's utopian community and pedagogical experiment in dialogue with contemporary concerns.

Learning From

# Introduction

Departing from Paul Klee's drawing, *Teppich* (Carpet) from 1927, the exhibition chapter *Learning From* addresses the study and appropriation of cultural production from outside the modernist mainstream, principally from non-Western sources, but also European folk traditions, the work of outsider artists, and children. Engagement with premodern artifacts and practices was a constant feature of the work of teachers and students at the Bauhaus and continued to inform their approach after the school's closure in 1933.

In the United States, in the middle of the twentieth century, the exploration of local craft practices and pre-Columbian cultures in North, Central, and South America helped to develop the formal language of abstraction as well as new procedures in weaving and the fiber arts based on precolonial forms and techniques. In questioning the division between the high and low arts, the Bauhaus had contested the classicism of the European art academies. However, the study of non-Western art and cultural practice, often used to deconstruct this binary, failed to take into account the colonial, sometimes violent and illegitimate appropriation of cultural goods, as well as the social, economic, and political disruption which European colonialism had left in its wake in North and South America, Africa, and Asia.

The incorporation of popular, indigenous, and Afro-Brazilian cultures into the lexicon of Brazilian modernism, while acting as a countermodel to European modernism and the Bauhaus, occurred simultaneously with the continued impact of colonial violence on the indigenous population. In post-revolutionary Mexico and postcolonial Morocco, the program of translating precolonial cultural production into the language of modernity acquired a sociopolitical dimension, as the recourse to local art practices of El Taller de Gráfica Popular (The Workshop for Popular Graphic Art, or TGP) in Mexico and the École Supérieure des Beaux Arts (ESBAC) in Casablanca demonstrate. *Learning From* shows, on the one hand, that Bauhaus modernism is indebted to transcultural encounters through asymmetrical power relations, but on the other, reveals that the synthesis of premodern and modern art in the context of

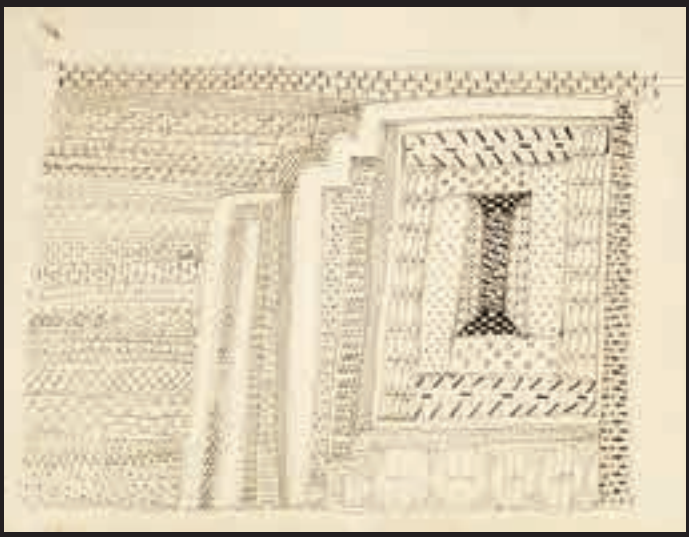
decolonization and cultural self-determination also generated approaches that strove to overcome cultural and patriarchal cultural practices.

Anni Albers
Josef Albers
Arthur Amora
Ruth Asawa
Mohamed Ataallah
Kader Attia
Lina Bo Bardi
Pietro Maria Bardi
Farid Belkahia
Susie Benally
Lena Bergner
Center for Post-Colonial Knowledge and Culture (CPKC), Berlin
Mohamed Chabâa
Ahmed Cherkaoui
Lygia Clark
Popovi Da
Johannes Driesch
Rogério Duarte
Heinrich Ehl
Carl Einstein
Bert Flint
Ernst Fuhrmann
Gilberto Gil
Trude Guermonprez
Mustapha Hafid
Mohamed Hamidi
Raoul d'Harcourt
Abdellah Hariri
Sheila Hicks
Maud Houssais & Jawad Elajnad
*Integral*
Alexandra Jacopetti
Paul Klee
Max Krehan
Walter Lehmann
Otto Lindig
*Maghreb Art*
Toni Maraini
Maria Martinez
Mohamed Melehi
Ben Van Meter
Hannes Meyer
Hossein Miloudi
Sibyl Moholy-Nagy
Hélio Oiticica
Lygia Pape
Max Peiffer Watenphul
Geraldo Sarno
Ivan Serpa
Elisa Martins da Silveira
*Souffles*
El Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP), México
Paulo Tavares
Lenore Tawney
Otto Weber
Marguerite Wildenhain
Margarete Willers
Anne Wilson
Karl With
Cristobal Zañartu

A
Gegenstand

Paul Klee,
*Teppich*, 1927

At the Bauhaus, Paul Klee worked as master of the Free Painting class and from 1927 to 1930 also taught his color and form theory in the weaving workshop; analyses of ornaments and textiles using the medium of drawing abound in his artistic work. In 1927, Paul Klee worked on a series of ink drawings including *Teppich*—a study of Maghrebian carpet patterns—as well as of a fantasy town entitled *Beride*, which uses a similar formal vocabulary to that of weaving patterns. The carpet motif and the *Beride* drawings refer to Klee's first trip to Tunisia in 1914. Four watercolors by an anonymous Tunisian artist in Klee's collection also represent fantasy towns and became a model for his amalgamation of an urban landscape as a two-dimensional pictorial construction. The trip to Tunisia had a decisive impact on Klee's search for a language of abstraction and his studies in watercolor. The handicrafts and African artworks taken back from these travels were often those produced specifically for tourist bazaars. The journey Klee took to Tunisia, in the company of his artist friends August Macke and Louis Moilliet, consisted of the more or less standard itinerary for tourists—including a stay in the colonial-villa neighborhood of Tunis. Tunisia was a protectorate of France until the nation gained its independence in 1956. The French colonial project in North Africa depended upon both the imposition of European "rational" systems of governance as well as the othering of local populations through a picturesque Orientalist imaginary. The latter encouraged the European vogue for research trips to North Africa and the Middle East.



*Teppich* (Carpet)
Paul Klee, 1927

Hans-Willem Snoeck,
Brooklyn, New York
Photograph © Edward Watkins

## B

## The Bauhaus and the Premodern

At the Bauhaus in Weimar and Dessau an interest in the vernacular and the premodern as well as in the social value of craft was reflected in many works of Bauhaus weavers and potters. A source for this was to be found in the Weimar Bauhaus library that included publications of European folk art, the decorative arts of North Africa and the Near East, as well as the ancient civilizations of the Americas. Andean patterns and techniques were studied by Bauhaus weaving students in order to innovate from within their own culture and to synthesize this knowledge into modern designs. Pictorial sources, knowledge about the objects, and their modernist appropriations were based on ethnological collections of German museums that were founded in the times of European colonialism.

## B1

## Ethnographic Publications at the Bauhaus

Along with other illustrated volumes dealing with German folk art and the art of the Middle Ages, the books on display here were in the library of the Weimar state Bauhaus school. They date from the early 1920s and provide evidence of the broad interest in non-European arts at that time. These publications—which present comprehensive pictorial documentation of ethnological collections—were edited after the First World War by Ernst Fuhrmann for the Folkwang Verlag and by Paul Westheim for the Ernst Wasmuth Verlag in Germany. The series showed items from the collections of ethnology museums in Berlin-Dahlem, Dresden, Hagen, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Vienna, and the Colonial Museum in Brussels. These museums, founded during the colonial period, presented societies classified as “different” to Europe. The photographs depicting these ethnological objects adhered to a logic of isolation. The illustrations of the objects in these books, rendered as individual artifacts or photographed in groups of similar objects

without context and against neutral backgrounds, neither take into account the socio-political and cultural function of the artifacts according to the societies they come from nor acknowledge the mostly illegal circumstances of their acquisition. The publications thus reflect the state of colonial knowledge production in Germany in the early 1920s while simultaneously bearing witness to the desire for a cultural world community that arose following the carnage of the First World War.

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## B2 | Bauhaus Weaving

A series of slit tapestries from the Weimar Bauhaus reflects the influence of Andean weaving at the school. This is Max Peiffer Watenphul's wall hanging from 1921, which combines the symmetry of a De Stijl painting with the bold colors and geometric motifs found in pre-Columbian textiles. A small linen-and-wool tapestry from 1922, by Margarete Willers, takes inspiration from the same source for a metamorphosing hybrid tree/fish motif. A later work from 1926, a woven silk wall hanging made by Anni Albers in Dessau, reflects the language of modern architecture and design and a change in ethos, away from the overtly ethnographic. Instead, its design plays with chromatic and geometric variegation to produce a non-objective abstraction of interlocking and repeating elements. The presence of Paul Klee in the weaving workshop and his notes on composition—which include reference to the geometric checkerboard motif as inherent to the primary structure of weaving—may well have given such works a theoretical underpinning. The wall hanging by Albers also invokes the checkerboard motif of the Inca tunics she had seen in ethnological museums and in reproductions from the Bauhaus library. Berlin's Dahlem museum, for example, which is famous for its collection of Peruvian textiles, was built-up through purchases from German collectors who were sourcing materials from archaeological sites in Peru, in what would now be considered a process of large-scale grave plundering.

C

# Anni and Josef Albers in the Americas

In 1933, Philip Johnson, the then-curator at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, recommended Josef and Anni Albers as instructors at Black Mountain College in North Carolina. From here, the Albers were able to travel widely, taking research trips to Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Chile, during which they observed, documented, and collected the work of Mesoamerican, as well as contemporary Indigenous cultures—a world with which they had only interacted previously through books and museum collections. They made the first of 14 trips to Mexico in the summer of 1935, commenting that art was everywhere. These Latin American travels had a profound impact on the Albers' work and teaching practice. They returned to Black Mountain with many examples of Indigenous handicrafts, notably for an exhibition of Mayan art in 1937 and for the Harriet Engelhardt Memorial Collection of Textiles, assembled by Anni Albers as a teaching tool. The couple admired the complex abstraction they discovered in Native and Mesoamerican art, which in the early twentieth century had become the subject of keen interest to the artistic avant-gardes. In the interplay between figure and ground, the rhythms and repetitions of Andean textiles, as well as in the façades of ancient archaeological sites, they discerned an aesthetic sensibility of extreme relevance to modern art and design. Photographs and collages by Josef Albers also testify to this: For example, in his pictures of terracotta figures, removed from their museum vitrines and set against a neutral ground and dramatically lit, Albers is interpolating these ancient objects, as he perceived it, into a vital modernist present.

C1

## Anni Albers

In her work as well as in her writing and teaching, in diverse ways, Anni Albers reflected on her encounter with Mesoamerican and Native American cultures. For example, techniques such as floating weft threads, which recall the structure of texts in her pictorial weaves and suggest the influence of her teacher Paul Klee, utilize a technique borrowed from ancient Peru. Her jewelry, made from inexpensive found objects, responds to examples found in ancient burial sites such as Monte Albán in Mexico. A remarkable juxtaposition of ancient relic with contemporary design can be seen in the formal affinity between the open structure of Peruvian lace fragments from her personal collection and the commercial textile samples made for interior use, which employ new materials like synthetic fibers, metal foil, and fiberglass alongside linen and jute. In later life Albers turned to making prints; the examples here include a printed version of her earlier tapestry *With Verticals*, which was indebted to Peruvian slit tapestries, and the study for a hooked rug, which recalls the monumental stone structures of Mesoamerican architecture, photographed by Josef Albers as well as Hannes Meyer.

C2

## Josef Albers

A series of works made by Josef Albers include the terracotta figures he and Anni Albers collected, seen here in photographs from a museum in Mexico City, a situation in which Josef Albers was given free rein to open displays and choreograph figures for the camera. Also shown are the black and white postcards of “Indian Art” from the Albers’ archive, produced by museums such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, as part of a process of documenting Native American cultures.

The analysis of abstract form is evident in the photographs and collages by Albers that explore the geometry of Navajo blankets as well as the brick façade of a Loggia wall, inspired by ancient architectural sites. Works on paper, including *Shrine*, are juxtaposed with artworks by the Brazilian neoconcretists such as Lygia Clark, who expressed her admiration for Josef Albers through a hand-written note in the pages of *Signals* magazine.

D

## Fiber Art

The fiber art movement, which emerged both in the United States and internationally during the 1960s, refers to artists working with textile materials—weaving off the loom, but also using knotting techniques, braiding, wrapping, and crochet. Their ambition was to see textiles afforded the same status as painting and sculpture and considered as a form of creative expression freed from utility. American "fiber artists" in particular owed a debt to the Bauhaus. While the school's weaving workshop had turned increasingly to function, rejecting the "pictures made from wool" of the Weimar period, the emphasis placed on material and structure, the system instituted for teaching and textural analysis—as well as the professed equality of the arts and crafts—was considered an important precedent. Bauhaus weaving collections were also available in American museums, and, significantly, many fiber artists trained under Bauhaus teachers including Lenore Tawney (with Marli Ehrman at the Institute of Design in Chicago), Sheila Hicks (with Josef Albers at Yale School of Art in Connecticut), and Anne Wilson and Kay Sekimachi (both of whom studied with Trude Guermonprez at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland). Fiber artists, like Bauhaus weavers before them, responded to a diffused notion of world textile cultures exemplified by Anni Albers' book, *On Weaving*. Dedicated to "my great teachers, the weavers of Peru," Albers, along with the younger generation, turned in particular to the textile traditions of the Incas for not only their technical brilliance but also the high social value the Inca civilization afforded weaving in contrast to its inferior status within their own culture.

*Black Woven Form (Fountain)*
Lenore Tawney, 1966

Museum of Arts and Design, New York,
Gift of the artist through
the American Craft Council, 1968
Courtesy Lenore G. Tawney Foundation
Photograph: Sheldan Comfert Collins

## D1 | Lenore Tawney

The objects displayed here—including notes on Native American art, a postcard from Peru, travel drawings, photographic documentation of weaving on a backstrap loom, and a pre-Columbian vessel—all come from the personal collection of American weaver Lenore Tawney. Tawney had also travelled throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East,India, and Japan, but the objects included in this display reflect research conducted in Bolivia, Guatemala, Peru, and the American Southwest. Materials such as feathers and beads collected on these journeys found their way into her work, but it was the technique of Peruvian gauze weaving, which she learnt from Lili Blumenau in 1961, that enabled her to create *Little River II* and *Black Woven Form*, both of which are included in this exhibition. Through this technique, Tawney was able to split the warp and work the weft to create and shape suspended "woven forms." A linear structure and the use of monochromatic yarn lend these objects a minimal appearance; and, in fact, it was Tawney's friend Agnes Martin who, occupying a studio in the same Manhattan warehouse, attributed these works their titles. In 1963, 22 of these works were featured as part of the seminal exhibition *Woven Forms* at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now the Museum of Arts and Design) in New York, where they helped set the subsequent direction for studio weaving as a specific art form in the United States.

## D2 | Sheila Hicks

Sheila Hicks studied painting with Josef Albers at the Yale School of Art. Here, she also met Anni Albers, who helped supervise her thesis on pre-Incaic culture alongside anthropologist Junius B. Bird, a specialist on pre-Columbian archaeology and curator at the American Museum of Natural History. Hicks won a Fulbright scholarship to travel across Latin America to Chile between 1957 and 1959, keeping journals and sketchbooks, photographing architectural sites, and collecting textile samples such as the Andean belts that influenced her "Faja" from this period. The film, *Opening the Archives,* shows Hicks discussing these experiences and describing their impact on her work. Through an introductory letter from Albers, Hicks taught the basic design and color course from Yale to students of the School of Architecture at the Universidad Católica in Santiago de Chile.

D3

## Ruth Asawa

The child of Japanese Americans, Ruth Asawa and her family were sent to an internment camp in Rohwer, Arkansas, in 1942 during the Second World War. She joined Black Mountain College in rural North Carolina in 1946 where she studied with Josef Albers and Richard Buckminster Fuller. Albers had a profound influence on her work, in particular his "matière" exercise in which students should trick the eye into believing something appeared to be something it was not, and the manipulation and combination of materials that Albers taught. This, combined with a looping wire technique used for egg boxes she learnt from an artisan on a trip to Mexico in 1947, led to the development of her wire sculpture for which recently she has become celebrated. In 1968, Asawa, who was also an activist and educator, founded the Alvarado School Arts Workshop, placing professional artists in public schools, often working with inexpensive found materials, in the tradition of Albers' preliminary course.

D4

## Trude Guermonprez

The textile artist Trude Guermonprez is closely linked to the Bauhaus weaving workshop through her study at the School of Applied Arts in Halle-Saale with the Bauhaus-trained Benita Koch-Otte, as well as her teaching with Anni Albers at Black Mountain College upon her move to the United States in the 1940s. Following a period at Pond Farm alongside Marguerite Wildenhain, she relocated to San Francisco where she became an influential teacher, first at the California School of Fine Arts, then permanently at the California College of Arts and Crafts (now California College of Art and Design) in Oakland. As well as commercial samples, the work Guermonprez produced included commissions for architecture and studio weaves, aligning her with West Coast fiber artists, many of whom were her pupils.

## D5 | Anne Wilson

During the 1970s, San Francisco Bay developed a vibrant textile culture, extending from studio weaving into countercultural practice. Anne Wilson—who trained with Trude Guermonprez at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland—was an active member of an experimental arts scene, which at that time included the emerging fields of both fiber and video art. Here, she is represented by her photographic documentation of "nets and grids" made between 1975 and 1979, and associated with both knotted fishing nets as well as minimalist sculpture. In addition, these photographs recall the extensive documentation of textile samples carried out at the Bauhaus, which magnified their woven structure.

## D6 | *The Saga of Macramé Park*

Macramé Park (1973) was a large outdoor climbing frame for children created in Bolinas, California, as an independent initiative of Alexandra Jacopetti. It was constructed from layers of hand-knotted rope suspended from logs salvaged from the beach nearby. As a textile artist in the Bay Area, Jacopetti was familiar with the weavers around Trude Guermonprez, but was principally involved in the hippy counterculture. She belonged to a craft guild that worked with apprentices, sold their output at craft fairs, and combined a medieval crafts approach with modern economics. Julia Bryan Wilson has described Macramé Park as neither an artwork nor an amateur project, but instead as an "example of a countercultural community practice." In her book *Native Funk and Flash*, which documents a broad range of Bay Area crafts, Jacopetti speaks of a hunger in her community for "a cultural identity strong enough to produce our own versions of the native costumes of Afghanistan or Guatemala, for a community life rich enough for us to need our own totems comparable to African and Native American masks and ritual objects." This eclectic cultural identification arose from within her community from the need to produce an alternative politics and culture in opposition to the mainstream. Macramé Park now only exists through documentation, including in this 1974 film by the hippy movement chronicler and filmmaker Ben Van Meter.

## E

## From Moscow to Mexico City: Lena Bergner and Hannes Meyer

In 1939, the Bauhaus weaver Lena Bergner and the second Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer moved to Mexico. As the head of the Urban City Planning Office of Mexico City, Meyer designed several projects which, however, were never built. Lena Bergner worked as a weaver and graphic designer in Mexico, where she studied different hand loom techniques, seeing herself as a proletarian artist. The couple was involved in radical art movements, social-revolutionary intellectual circles, and anti-fascist groups in Mexico, and were members of and editors for El Taller de Gráfica Popular (The Workshop for Popular Graphic Art, or TGP). In Mexico, Meyer and Bergner openly reflected upon their socialist ideals. Such reflections included writing, publishing, editing books, visiting sites of Mesoamerican monuments for photographic purposes, and studies of local architecture and handicrafts.

### E1

### Soviet Union Folklore

Lena Bergner and Hannes Meyer had lived and worked in the Soviet Union from 1930 to 1936, returning to Switzerland after the direction of the Stalinist regime became evident. For research purposes, Bergner and Meyer had collected a large number of photographs from the *Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy* (VDNKh, Moscow, 1939–41). These depict regional costumes, weaving workshops, styles of ceramic painting, and carpet design from the various Soviet republics listed above. As curator of the photographic collection at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico, Meyer used the photographs for an exhibition there to present national dances, festivities, and folk costumes. Bergner presented colorful folkloric pattern stripes at the Mexico City book fair, which she had developed when working for a weaving factory in the Soviet Union, to revive local traditional textiles in modern clothes in the frame of Stalin's Five-Year Plan.

*TGP Mexico: El Taller de Gráfica Popular, Doce Años de Obra Artística Colectiva*
(The Workshop for Popular Graphic Art: A record of twelve years of collective work)
La Estampa Méxicana:
Mexico City, p. 93, 1949
Hannes Meyer (ed.),
illustrations: Leopoldo Méndez

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Archiv der Moderne

E2

## Weaving Studies

At the Bauhaus, Lena Bergner had already studied non-European textiles in Paul Klee's class, undertaking research on weaving techniques used in Oriental carpets as well as different Amerindian methods. In Mexico she was asked by the Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas (Department of Indigenous Affairs) to develop a plan and curriculum for a hand-weaving workshop for the Otomí people in the Ixmiquilpan region in Northeast Mexico that used regional resources and intended to educate local peasants to enable them to work at home afterwards—a project that was never realized.

E3

## TGP Mexico: El Taller de Gráfica Popular

El Taller de Gráfica Popular (The Workshop for Popular Graphic Art, or TGP) was a collective established in post-revolutionary Mexico in 1937, which remained active until 1977. The collective sought to support class struggle and social-revolutionary goals through the production of simple linocut and woodcut graphics that referred to the visual cultures of the workers as well as to signs and symbols of marginalized indigenous groups. The workshop's posters, illustrations, flyers, and calendar sheets incorporated stylistic and iconographic elements derived from Central America's urban and rural popular culture, as well as quite deliberately adopting pre-Columbian motifs. As the outcome of a collective practice, TGP graphics implicitly contested the individualism inherent in many of Western modernism's artistic movements, positing an alternative model of visual production. The graphics were sold cheaply, with the revenue generated used to support labor movements and literacy campaigns in Mexico as well as liberation movements in Central and South America. These endeavors led to the founding of the publishing house La Estampa Méxicana in 1942 that from 1947 to 1949 Hannes Meyer led from Mexico City. To mark the occasion of its tenth anniversary, Hannes Meyer and the graphic artists of the TGP, with Lena Bergner serving as book designer, edited a commemorative publication detailing the work of the collective. It is still counted among the most significant documents of political graphic art from the twentieth century.

F

## *Reading Sibyl Moholy-Nagy*

In the 1960s, an interest in regional and vernacular architecture evolved into a type of countercultural contestation of the international modernist style then prevalent in the United States. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's book *Native Genius in Anonymous Architecture* (1957) is an early document of this movement. Today it stands among the classic texts of architectural history and is remarkable for its prescient attention to building typologies and construction techniques which are the outcome of different forms of social practice and whose builders remain anonymous. They include forms of Amerindian settlement, Mexican pueblos and churches, as well as barns and houses built by the first European settlers. The book highlights architecture's role in fulfilling cultural and social needs, as well as taking into account the influence of political and climatic conditions on different building methods. Moholy-Nagy's book was the result of several research trips undertaken between 1948 and 1952, during which she documented examples of structural typologies deemed banal in American universities and consequently ignored. In her study, Moholy-Nagy focused on local buildings in North and Central America, but she also cited anonymous buildings and architectural details from the Middle Ages and the German Baroque period. She argued that popular American architecture had a unique directness and did not cleave to specific styles, criticizing the canon of Euro-American architectural history that up until then had only taken elite architecture and famous architects into account. However, in retrospect, the book can be faulted for having failed to develop a critical vocabulary regarding settler colonialism and instead adopting anthropological methods informed by structuralism.

G

## Marguerite Wildenhain and Pond Farm

Marguerite Wildenhain trained at the Bauhaus pottery with Gerhard Marcks and Max Krehan, and in 1925 became the first woman certified as a "master potter." Fleeing Nazi persecution at the start of the Second World War, Wildenhain immigrated to the United States. She made her way to the West Coast, eventually settling at Pond Farm, the artist colony established in the 1940s by architect Gordon Herr and his wife, the writer Jane Herr, in Northern California. Pond Farm proposed a utopian model combining artistic work, teaching, farming, and self-sufficient communal living. In this respect, the community mirrored Black Mountain College (established in 1933 and founded on the holistic principles of the philosopher John Dewey), which also attracted Bauhaus émigrés. Wildenhain taught ceramics at the Pond Farm summer school along with other Europeans who had settled in the United States—such as the weaver Trude Guermonprez, who had studied with Benita Koch-Otte, and collage artist Jean Varda. Wildenhain continued in this role long after internal disputes led to the Pond Farm community's disbandment. At Pond Farm Pottery, Wildenhain brought the intensity of her Bauhaus experiences to bear, insisting on a strict and rigorous process, with students throwing thousands of pots in order to acquire a feel for the clay but forbidden from keeping samples of their work. She is remembered as an inspiring but authoritarian teacher. Pond Farm was conceived not only as a place for training in the art of crafts but also as a school for life, and while Wildenhain's students were put through their paces in the workshop they were also encouraged in their free time to discuss subjects ranging from the appreciation of nature to historical and contemporary philosophy.

## G1

## Wildenhain: Influences and Context

Marguerite Wildenhain's ceramics suggest the influence of her Bauhaus teachers Max Krehan, Gerhard Marcks, and Theodor Bogler, some of whose works are included in this exhibition and feature folk elements such as patterning, figures, and faces in earthy browns and blacks. These incorporate aspects of her drawings, notably her observations of people and landscapes, many of which she made while on winter visits to Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, and Guatemala. Included are Wildenhain's depictions of Native American culture, illustrated in her book *... that We Look and See: An Admirer Looks at the Indians*, where the artist treats this subject in an idealized way. This display brings together a range of significant ceramic works by Wildenhain alongside her drawings, as well as some of the pre-Columbian materials she collected during her travels in Central and South America.

*Double Face Pot*
Marguerite Wildenhain
1960–70

Luther College Fine Arts Collection,
Decorah, Iowa

H

## Maria Martinez: Ceramics

The potter Maria Martinez (1887–1980) originated from San Ildefonso Pueblo, a community 20 miles northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Martinez emphasized that she learnt pottery over the course of years by observing her aunt, grandmother, and father's cousin while they worked. She took pleasure in passing on knowledge and skills herself, which she did by inviting people to watch her at work. In around 1918, Martinez began developing black Ildefonso pottery. She learnt this art from Sara Fina Tafoya, the ceramic matriarch of the neighboring Santa Clara Pueblo. Tafoya practiced the precolonial pottery techniques of the Mexican high cultures. This ceramic type was further developed by Martinez, receiving its luster and varied black tones through a specific firing process. The clear forms and the shiny, smooth surfaces that reflect the light were decorated with a ribbon of lighter ornamentation or a horned snake, work that her husband, Julian, completed. Martinez's ceramics have featured in numerous exhibitions since the 1920s. This is proof of a revitalization of forgotten practices and artisanal knowledge that was co-initiated by Amerindian female artists at the beginning of the twentieth century—long before the attention of a Western avant-garde.

I

## *Navajo Film Themselves*

The various research projects on Amerindian crafts, undertaken by artists and designers who emerged out of the Bauhaus context, did not initially raise questions regarding authorship and self-representation. In anthropology, however, the critique of unequal appropriation and description was already undergoing a process of negotiation. This process is expressed in Sol Worth and John Adair's film project of 1966, in which the two filmmakers instructed residents of the Pine Springs Navajo reservation in Arizona in the craft of filmmaking in order that they themselves could depict their own culture. All of these films were originally screened and discussed on the reservation. After the project, Worth and Adair published the book *Through Navajo Eyes*, establishing a new relationship between the documentation of indigenous cultural practice and its written analysis. Collected under the overall title *Navajo Film Themselves*, these short films—with names such as "Intrepid Shadows" by Al Clah, "The Navajo Silversmith" and "The Shallow Well Project" by Johnny Nelson, "Old Antelope Lake" by Mike Anderson, "The Spirit of the Navajos" by Maxine and Mary Tsosie, and "A Navajo Weaver" by Susie Benally—document a variety of spiritual and artisanal practices. In the film presented here, "The Second Weaver," Susie Benally instructs her mother on how to use a movie camera so that she can film her daughter weaving a belt.

J

## Paulo Tavares, *Des-Habitat / Revista Habitat (1950–1954)*

Similar to other "militant modernist" publications that flourished at the time, *Habitat*—the arts and design magazine edited by architect and designer Lina Bo Bardi in 1950—not only propagated images of modern art and architecture, but also images of popular and indigenous cultures. In this way, it simultaneously introduced its audience to the vocabulary of modernism and vernacular and native forms of cultural expression. Paulo Taveres' *Des-Habitat* investigates the ways in which the aesthetic language of *Habitat* framed indigenous arts and crafts. It mobilizes a series of design strategies based on reappropriation, collage, and replacement—procedures central to the graphic language of *Habitat*—to interrogate the context from which these images emerged as signifiers of modernity within the magazine's pages. This includes looking at how the government's policy of pacification of indigenous groups, which included resettlement and the confiscation of land, also led to the circulation of indigenous artifacts for the elite. Thus, it exposes how *Habitat* itself, by virtue of its pedagogic language and visual design, functioned as a framing device to conceal context, and its own inherently colonial perspective.

K

## Lina Bo Bardi and Pedagogy

Lina Bo Bardi was an Italian-Brazilian architect, exhibition designer, and the editor of journals including *Domus* and *Habitat*. After moving to Brazil in 1946—where her husband Pietro Maria Bardi became the first director of the São Paulo Museum of Art (MASP)—in 1947, the two of them, together with architect Jacob Ruchti, created the Instituto de Arte Contemporânea (Institute of Contemporary Art, or IAC) within the museum. Although only active between 1951 and 1953, as the first design school in Brazil, the IAC extended the work of the museum, bringing European Modernism to audiences by introducing a structured industrial design training. Exhibitions at the museum included that of Thonet chairs, the work of Max Bill, Le Corbusier, and Alexander Calder, as well as "Vitrine das Formas" (Display of forms), aimed at reorienting and updating Brazilian taste. The intention of the school, which grew out of a perceived lack of design expertise, was to train industrial designers as specialists within the formal discipline of modernism. The concept for the IAC's activities was influenced explicitly by the Bauhaus and the colleges established in its wake, such as Black Mountain College (1933) and the Chicago Institute of Design (1937). It claimed a Bauhaus pedigree and included a preliminary course, research in design specialisms, and the aim to establish links to industry as well as to maintain connections to an international avant-garde. The IAC's inauguration at MASP, in March 1951, opened with a solo show by Max Bill, a former Bauhaus student and first director of the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design) in Ulm, Germany. The presence of Max Bill, celebrated by Brazil's artistic milieu, and paving the way for the development of concrete art and industrial design in the following decade, also drew criticism, in response to his outspoken, dogmatic, and patronizing critique of modernist architecture in Brazil.

*Cadeira de beira de estrada*
(Roadside chair)
Lina Bo Bardi, 1967

Instituto Lina Bo e P. M. Bardi,
São Paulo

K1 | Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia

In 1959, Lina Bo Bardi moved to Salvador to found and direct the Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia (MAM-BA). More than a museum, the MAM-BA was devised as a popular art documentation center and school. Here she conceived of a second school, the Escola de Desenho Industrial e Artesanato. A crucial aspect of Bo Bardi's idea was to bring together designers and local master craftspeople—connecting modern and industrial creativity to Brazilian society by establishing a popular university centered on a school of industrial design and handicraft. For her, this was a turn away from European examples and an acknowledgement of the subsistence technologies, powerful aesthetics, and cultural presence of the non-affluent communities of Brazil. Bo Bardi's Bahia School also resonated with the progressive ideas of educator Anísio Teixeira who conceived Escola Parque (also represented in this exhibition).

K2 | Popular Objects

Lina Bo Bardi believed that handicrafts—understood not as folklore but as a form of technological innovation emanating from the hands of the people—should provide the basis of Brazilian industrial design. Consequently, she collected many objects of so-called "popular culture." These were found in street markets, rural centers, and among the indigenous and Afro-Brazilian communities of the different cities in the Northeast region of Brazil, whose economy and handicrafts at that time were being promoted by the Superintendência do desenvolvimento do Nordeste (Development Superintendency of the Northeast, or SUDENE), a government agency created in 1959. After the socially and culturally conservative civil-military coup of 1964, much of Bo Bardi's collection was lost and the new government removed her from the directorship of the MAM-BA.

K3 | Escola Parque

When Lina Bo Bardi relocated to Salvador to create the MAM-BA, the Centro Educacional Carneiro Ribeiro was already an important reference for pedagogy in Brazil. Founded in the working-class neighborhood of Caixa D'Água in 1950 by

pioneering educator Anísio Teixeira, the school, also known as Escola Parque (Park School) proposed a new model of inclusive education for young people—one that Bo Bardi wished to incorporate within the museum. Teixeira was influenced by the principles of progressive education and the community-school model propounded by the philosopher and educator John Dewey, whose ideas were also extremely influential for the founders of Black Mountain College in North Carolina. Providing instruction in sports, art, industrial crafts, social studies, and literacy, Escola Parque's aim was to compliment *escolas classes* (school classes) in a system of integrated education where academic work and manual practice were considered equally important.

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K4

## The Avant-Garde in Bahia

In the late 1950s to the early 1960s, the city of Salvador—which had been marginalized during Brazil's modernization—brought together several cultural figures in order to foster a renewal of local culture: a moment that writer Antonio Risério dubbed "the Avant-Garde in Bahia." This scene flourished with the involvement of rector Edgar dos Santos and architect Lina Bo Bardi, composer Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, theater director Martim Gonçalves, and essayist Agostinho da Silva, all of whom influenced a generation of younger artists—such as Glauber Rocha, Gilberto Gil, and Caetano Veloso—each of them important figures in the emergence of Brazilian counterculture. Cross-pollination within the arts was significant: The polymath and composer, Duarte, became one of the creators of Tropicália, a movement known for combining traditional Brazilian culture with foreign influences and radical aesthetics.

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K5

## The Cinema Novo Movement

In its search for an alternative aesthetic form to that prevailing in mainstream Hollywood-produced genre films, the Cinema Novo movement realized an alternative mode of production to the industrialized studio system. Its films deal with poverty, illiteracy, and exploitation in the Northeast region of Brazil, sharing an ideological position with the Argentinian Tercer Cine (Third Cinema) movement. In *Vitalino / Lampião*, Geraldo Sarno documents the Northeast Brazilian

ceramist Manuel Vitalino dos Santos as he reflects on the role of art and popular culture in front of the camera. Lina Bo Bardi was friends with many of Cinema Novo's actors, and the exploration of street culture she began in Salvador Bahia was reflected in her now-famous exhibition *A Mão do Povo Brasileiro* (The hand of the Brazilian people), held at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) in 1969. Around 1963, artist Lygia Pape began to engage in film following the dissolution of the neo-concretists, working in close contact with the Cinema Novo movement. She produced posters as well as textual works for films by Glauber Rocha, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Paulo Gil Soares, and others. Lygia Pape references this topic in her 1975 film, *A mão do povo brasileiro,* which builds on Bo Bardi's research, staging an inquiry into how popular Brazilian culture arose out of broad discussion and criticism of the country's existing social, cultural, and political systems.

L

## Ivan Serpa and Grupo Frente

The art school of the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ) was established in 1952 led by Ivan Serpa, who gave classes for both children and adults—including artists who would go on to form the Grupo Frente (1954–57) and later the neo-concrete movement (1959–61). Writer and critic Mário Pedrosa described the "experimental" character of these classes; and the fact that this experimentation was structured through the study of color, materials, technique, and composition has encouraged art historian Adele Nelson to claim that Serpa's teaching method was substantially based on the Bauhaus *Vorkurs* (preliminary course). This link is also identifiable in comments made by the director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, Alfred Barr, about the work of artists in the fourth São Paulo Biennial (1957), which he dismissed as being merely "Bauhaus experiments." Also noteworthy were efforts to create an art school at MAM-RJ based on the Hochschule für Gestaltung (School of Design, HfG) in Ulm, Germany (1953–68): The Escola Técnica de Criação (ETC) was an initiative that would later influence the foundation of the Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial (School of Industrial Design, or ESDI) in Rio de Janeiro in 1963.

L1 | Grupo Frente

Displayed here are a series of works by Brazilian artists associated with the Grupo Frente, including Lygia Pape, Lygia Clark, Hélio Oiticica, and Ivan Serpa. One notable fact about this group was their dialogue with the visual expression of children, autodidacts, and psychiatric patients. This can be seen in the interchange between Serpa's class and the Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente (Museum of Images of the Unconscious) established in 1952 in Rio de Janeiro by the psychiatrist Nise da Silveira, who founded a painting and sculpture workshop for psychiatric patients —represented here by the work of Artur Amora. An openness to art from beyond the avant-garde is also evident through the inclusion in the Grupo Frente exhibitions from 1954 to 1957 of "naïve" artist Elisa Martins da Silveira.

M

## Decolonizing Culture: The Casablanca School

In 1962, six years after Morocco achieved independence from France, the artist Farid Belkahia became director of the École des Beaux Arts (School of Fine Arts) in Casablanca. The school, at the time still governed by a French-colonial ideology based on a tradition of Orientalist figuration, enrolled very few Moroccan students. Belkahia urged radical pedagogical change. The social, spatial, and spiritual function of the arts in the Maghreb and the rich history of local craft production presented an alternative body of knowledge to existing Western models of art education, based on the notional hierarchy between the applied and non-applied arts. Asserting the need to decolonize Moroccan cultural production, the art school's curriculum was revised by Belkahia and the artists and intellectuals teaching at the Casablanca School—including figures such as Mohamed Chabâa, Bert Flint, Toni Maraini, and Mohamed Melehi. Separately and in tandem, they took up the study of North African handicraft and architectural practices, publishing papers and articles about craft, interior design, and the Moroccan vernacular. They also introduced courses at the school on photography, silkscreen printing, and art in the public sphere. Their aim was to use the productive friction between different bodies of knowledge to create an authentically local, egalitarian, postcolonial visual language, beyond the normative hierarchies of manual versus cognitive labor or popular versus elite culture. Belkahia and his colleagues' reformulations included an acknowledgment of the transcultural character of early modernism, which in the course of devising their new curriculum for Casablanca led them to revisit the Bauhaus pedagogical stratagems that had aimed to synthesize the arts.


Toni Maraini Teaching
an Art History Class
at the École des Beaux Arts
in Casablanca
ca. 1962–65

Courtesy Toni Maraini
Photograph: Mohammed Melehi

## M1

## New Vocabularies in Painting

The Moroccan painter Ahmed Cherkaoui trained as a calligrapher before studying in Paris and Warsaw following Moroccan independence. In the early 1960s, Cherkaoui abandoned figurative painting and began working with elements drawn from Islamic calligraphy, Moroccan ceramics, and the tattoo and gold work of the Amazigh. Also influenced by the work of Roger Bissière and Paul Klee, his painting from this time deals with tactility, color, line, and form, synthesizing various surface treatments and sign systems employed by local artists and craftspeople with elements from European modernism. After his early death, Cherkaoui became a role model for an entire generation of Moroccan artists, including Farid Belkahia who presented his works at the seminal Pan-African festivals in Dakar (1966) and Algeria (1969). In 1962, Belkahia was appointed as director of the School of Fine Arts in Casablanca. Together with the artists Mohamed Melehi and Mohamed Chabâa, Italian art historian Toni Maraini, and Dutch ethnological researcher Bert Flint, he developed the school's curriculum, incorporating the study of African craftsmanship, Arabic and Amazigh architecture, as well as Bauhaus principles and methods. The artists Hossein Miloudi and Abdellah Hariri were both students at the school.

## M2

## A New Epistemology

The visual Artists Farid Belkahia, Mohamed Chabâa, and Mohamed Melehi were also important protagonists in the debate on a postcolonial modernity in the Maghreb and Middle East. At the School of Fine Arts in Casablanca, Belkahia together with Bert Flint published three issues of *Maghreb Art*, providing insights into how Moroccan crafts were incorporated into everyday life. With their writing and teaching, Toni Maraini and Bert Flint created a new epistemology applied to the study of art from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan and West Africa, linking these to a notional modernism outside the discourses of colonial modernity. In the leftist cultural magazine *Souffles* (1966–72), the Casablanca group published drawings, graphics, and articles. Melehi and Chabâa were in charge of the magazine's graphic design. Later in the 1970s, Mohamed Melehi, the art historian Toni Maraini, and the writer Mostafa Nissaboury edited the art magazine *Integral*. An issue

from 1978 features an interview with Austro-American Bauhaus teacher Herbert Bayer who lived intermittently in Tangier, and who had become friends with Melehi and Maraini at the *Ruta de la Amistad* (Route of friendship), a public sculptural project initiated by Mathias Goeritz in Mexico City.

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M3

## In the Public Sphere

According to the members of the Casablanca group, art must demonstrate use-value and be integrated with society. At the School of Fine Arts in Casablanca both students and teachers experimented with different sorts of institutional and urban milieus, discovering where it was possible to present work outside a gallery framework to a more heterogeneous audience. At that time, the public space represented a zone of relative freedom, unfettered by national and institutional norms or market trends. In 1968, the School of Fine Arts' annual student exhibition was held in the Parc de la Ligue Arabe. In 1969, the exhibition *Présence Plastique*, showing the work of the School's teachers, was mounted in the large public square Jemaa el-Fnaa in Marrakesh, with works presented at a bus stop near the famous marketplace.

This exhibition put forward practices, as Toni Maraini put it, "inspired by the ideas and methods of the first real school of modern art, the Bauhaus."

This was the spirit that was taken on between 1968 and 1978, when the architectural office Faraoui and De Mazières commissioned artists to create works for new architectural projects conceived specifically around the concept of integration—a term from which this body of work subsequently took its name. Factories, hospitals, universities, holiday centers, banks, and hotels all benefited from this unique practice situated between art, craft, and architecture. The collaborative approach opened the way for new methods of appropriating popular arts as well as reformulating the conventional ways works of art were regarded in Morocco.

N

Kader Attia

*The Body's Legacies: The Objects*

*Colonial Melancholia*

A loose starting point for French-Algerian Artist Kader Attia was Paul Klee's voyage to Tunis in 1914 and his subsequent appropriation of local handicrafts. Here, the two works by Attia deal with the delicate issues of cultural transfer during the age of colonialism and the current questions of restitution. Attia seeks to highlight two aspects of these debates: the never-ending process of appropriation and reappropriation and the complexity of restitution.

The production and use of cultural goods is a result of transcultural encounters that provoke an incalculable circulation of meanings in various directions. For example, by integrating the occupiers' symbols of power (European coins) in their cultural productions (handcrafted jewelry), colonized peoples reappropriate their identities as subjects, creating their own modernity.

Attia's film, *The Body's Legacies: The Objects*, deals critically with the objects that the colonizing powers or missionaries removed from non-Western societies and took to Western countries. Having entered private and public collections, they have been presented from a purely Western scholarly perspective since then.

In his filmic and sculptural contributions the artist uses the example of the Amazighs, or Berbers, who integrated coins into traditional jewelry or sculptures, to explore how traditional societies have absorbed and reappropriated Western modernity into their own culture through the inclusion of ready-made objects produced by the cultures of the colonizing powers.

Moving Away

## Introduction

The starting point of the chapter *Moving Away* is Marcel Breuer's collage *ein bauhaus-film. fünf jahre lang* (a bauhaus film: five years long), published in the first issue of the journal *bauhaus* in 1926. Breuer's "filmstrip" presents the development of his chair design from handcrafted object, to industrial prototype, toward a future in which the designed object becomes obsolete. *Moving Away* examines how the Bauhaus debates on design evolved during the first half of the twentieth century, and subsequently how they changed in relation to different societal conditions and geographies. With case studies in the Soviet Union, India, China, Taiwan, North Korea, and Nigeria, through archival and filmic research and commissioned artworks, *Moving Away* explores how the Bauhaus evolved through its entanglement with social, cultural, and political exigencies.

The growing influence of the National Socialist Party in Germany in the 1930s led to numerous Bauhaus teachers and students emigrating. *Moving Away* looks at how Bauhaus design concepts and the requirements and standards of design they embodied were received by other societies, and how they were realized and altered through this diaspora.

Dismissed from his post in 1930 by right-wing political forces in Dessau due to his solidarity with the communist student union, the second Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer applied to the Soviet embassy for a transfer to Moscow; in 1931 seven of his former students followed him, many of whom would fall victim to Stalin's "War Communism." The opportunity to realize avant-garde cities on a previously unimagined scale in this newly industrializing state soon came into conflict with the official doctrine of socialist realism. Geopolitical storms, generated by Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini's seizure of power, also became evident at the fourth meeting of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in 1933, where Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and others led discussions on international urbanism.

In the United States, where Gropius immigrated in 1937, the Bauhaus would stand for freedom and democracy. Gropius taught international students at Harvard, including the Chinese architects Henry Huang and Ieoh Ming Pei, and

through these contacts began to question modernism's universal principles. Confronted through a collaboration with I. M. Pei with ideas about Asian landscape architecture that he initially rejected, Gropius came to understand how Asian spatial concepts and vernacular traditions could greatly improve modernist architecture.

Based on interactions with teachers from the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design), Ulm, the ideas of the Bauhaus can be traced to the curriculum of India's National Institute of Design (NID), founded in 1961 as part of the Indian government's strategy to improve the nation's standard of living. At NID, the intention was for industrial design to act as a development tool and catalyst for economic growth to serve the needs of a non-affluent, mostly rural population, with designers also utilizing the technical knowledge accumulated by the subcontinent over millennia.

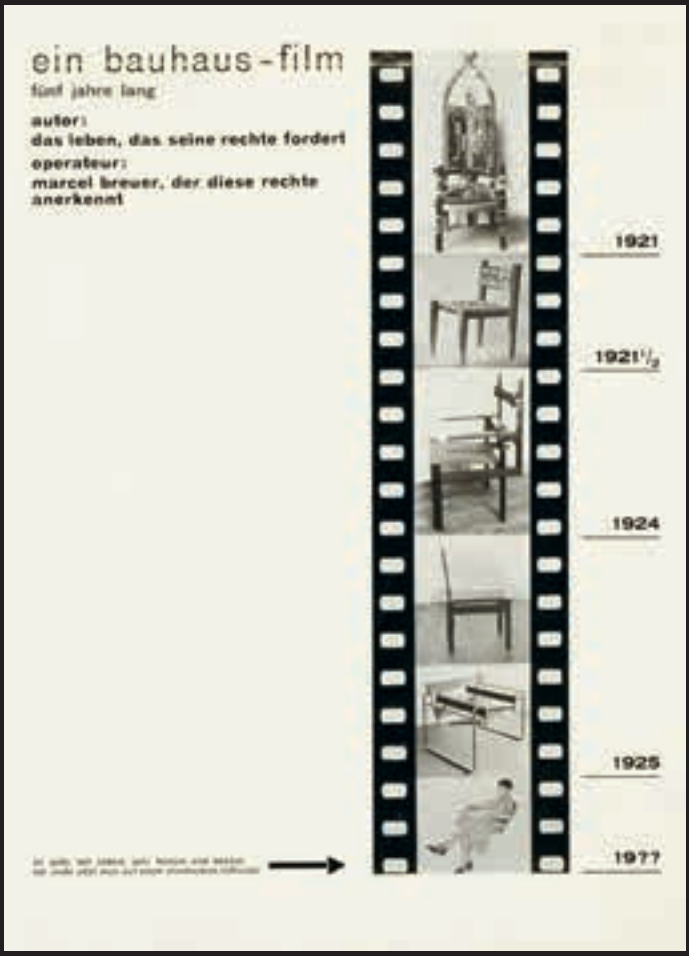
The end of the Second World War and of European colonial rule, the global independence movements, and the new world order of Non-Aligned Nations during the Cold War exerted an international influence on design policy including campus architecture. This is apparent in the university building in Ile-Ife, which the Israeli Bauhaus graduate and architect Arieh Sharon designed on behalf of Western Nigeria's first post-independence national government between the early 1960s and 1980s. Today, Obafemi Awolowo University still functions in its original form as a learning environment.

*ABC – Beiträge Zum Bauen*
*Abhikalpa*
David Abraham
Otl Aicher
*L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*
*Arquitectura y Decoración*
S. Balaram
*bauhaus. Zeitschrift für Gestaltung*
Devashis Bhattacharya
Marcel Breuer
Chang Chao-Kang
Chen Chi-kwan
Jochen Claussen-Finks
& Phani Tetali
Alice Creischer
*Design: Review of Architecture,*
*Applied and Free Arts*
Charles and Ray Eames
Wils Ebert
Zvi Efrat
Moisei Ginzburg
Walter Gropius
Hans Gugelot
Ernst Hahn
Wilhelm Jacob Hess
Hubert Hoffmann
Alfred Kantorovich
Cornelis van der Linden
*Marg: A Magazine of*
*Architecture and Craft*
Doreen Mende
René Mensch
Hannes Meyer
Nikolay Milyutin
László Moholy-Nagy
Sudhakar Nadkarni
Wendelien van Oldenborgh
*Output*
Mahendra C. Patel
I. M. Pei
Jawaja Project
Konrad Püschel
M. P. Ranjan
*RED*
Alexander Rodchenko
Benoy Sarkar
Arieh Sharon
*Sovremennaja Arhitektura*
Varvara Stepanova
*TASK*
Philipp Tolziner
*Ulm*
Antonin Urban
H. Kumar Vyas
Tibor Weiner
Klaus Wille

A
Gegenstand

Marcel Breuer,
*ein bauhaus-film.*
*fünf jahre lang,* 1926

The focal object for *Moving Away* is Marcel Breuer's collage *ein bauhaus-film*, published in the first issue of the journal *bauhaus* in 1926, the year the school reopened in Dessau. Breuer's filmstrip visualizes the development of chair design over the course of five years at the Bauhaus—from handcrafted object, to industrial prototype, toward a future where the task of designing objects might become obsolete. The design of everyday life had already changed character when the Bauhaus school moved to Dessau in 1926 to the newly built campus and masters' residences designed by Walter Gropius. Breuer, who wrote about the need for design to respond to a particular time and place, thus argued against universal forms and methods. The collage appears in the magazine as an advertisement, reflecting the attempt to sell and promote Bauhaus products designed by students and teachers. It also sits adjacent to an article by Walter Gropius discussing the new campus, the masters' houses, and the Törten housing estate in Dessau, designed to provide affordable housing while incorporating the first ideas in urbanism. Situated in this way, it becomes part of a discussion about design at the Bauhaus—from prototype and commodity to its wider social function in housing projects and city planning, as well as an unknown future in which design might need to adapt to meet as yet unforeseen societal needs.




*ein bauhaus-film.*
*fünf jahre lang*
(a bauhaus film: five years long)
Marcel Breuer, 1926

*bauhaus*, vol. 1, p. 3

A1

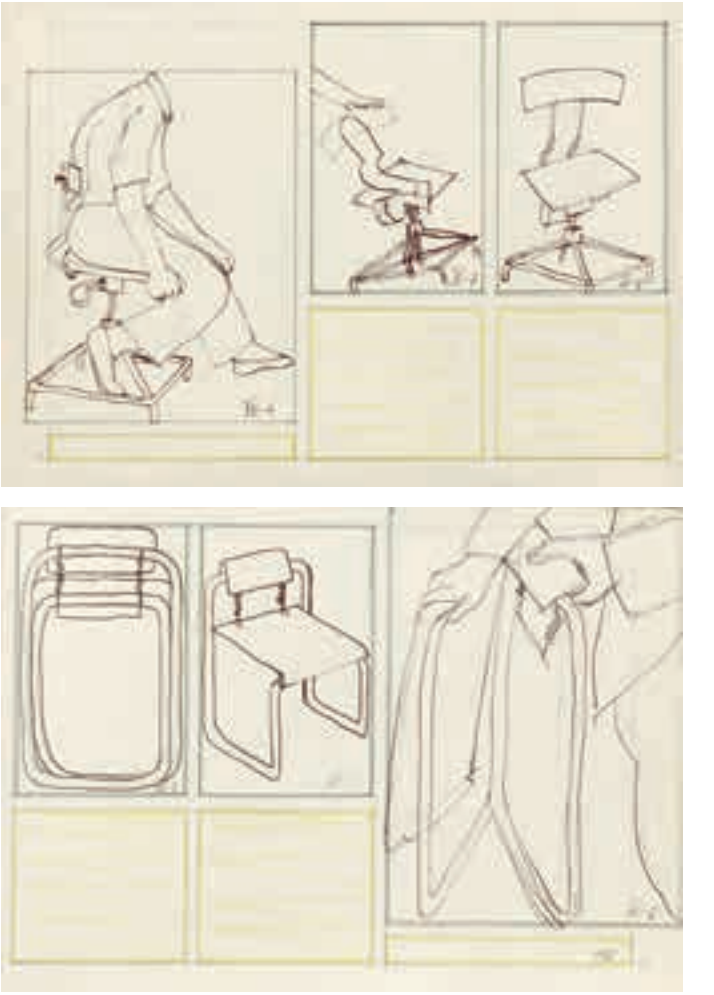
*bauhaus. Zeitschrift für Gestaltung,* 1926–31

The *bauhaus* journal was planned as a quarterly publication and cost 60 pfennigs. Ultimately, 14 issues were produced; eleven published from 1926 to 1929 under Walter Gropius and Hannes Meyer, and three issues in 1931 under the directorship of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The magazine became the organ for a new design vocabulary, propagating a synthesis of economic, political, and cultural demands. Articles by teachers, students, and guest writers promoted a new epistemology of design, which included the shift from workshop to laboratory and aimed at propagating a notion of design that would acknowledge the everyday needs of life in modern society, as well as help to promote a new standard of living.

B

## Maquette of a Bauhaus Book

From 1939 to 1949, the second Bauhaus director, Hannes Meyer, lived with Bauhaus-trained weaver Lena Bergner in Mexico City. As head of the Urban City Planning Office of Mexico City Meyer designed several unbuilt projects, he also started to work on a publication about the Bauhaus in Dessau under his directorship, including its teaching, exhibitions, and building collaborations. The hand-drawn layout of a Bauhaus book never made it to final publication. This absent book speaks of how the reception of the Bauhaus, based on exhibitions and publications produced in the United States and West Germany, was seen from the perspective of Walter Gropius. For a long time the divided reception of the Bauhaus after the Second World War—the role that Cold War ideology and competing systems played in design and architectural history—was not taken into consideration. The Estate of Hannes Meyer and the Bauhaus graduates who studied under him in Dessau, or who joined him to work in the Soviet Union—such as Konrad Püschel, Philipp Tolziner, and Lotte Stam-Beese—have opened up new perspectives concerning the internationalist, communist networks of the Bauhaus. These networks offered paths for flight and migration, including the possibility to help build for the first Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union or to be part of the communist and Jewish diaspora in post-revolutionary Mexico. Today, several decades after the end of the Cold War, international scholars and artists have started to engage with this legacy of the Bauhaus and analyze its relation to socialist internationalism.



**Maquette of a Bauhaus Book**
**Hannes Meyer**
**ca. 1947–51**

gta Archiv / ETH Zurich, Hannes Meyer

C

## From Hua Tung to the Tunghai University Campus: Walter Gropius and I. M. Pei

Ieoh Ming Pei, who studied under Walter Gropius at Harvard in the early 1940s, is credited with shifting his teacher's thinking in relation to how vernacular, non-Western traditions could be used in modern architecture. His master's thesis, the design for a museum of modern art in Shanghai, supervised by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, set out to demonstrate how Western architectural concepts needed adaptation. Hence, it used values from Chinese architecture such as the relation between interior and exterior, and its design focused on accommodating the Asian museums' smaller scale exhibits. Skeptical at first, Gropius came to be fascinated by the sophisticated manner with which Pei handled traditional concepts without lapsing into pastiche. In 1945, Gropius established The Architects Collaborative (TAC), and one of its first commissions was from the United Board of Christian Colleges to design Hua Tung University, located on the outskirts of Shanghai. Gropius invited Norman Fletcher to supervise the project and I. M. Pei to act as associate architect. The campus design includes two- and three-storied buildings, which draw on traditional Chinese architecture, with tiled roofs, courtyards, and covered walkways arranged around an artificial lake. For Gropius, the interplay between nature and culture, drawn from Asian architecture, would balance "volumes and space, land and water, buildings and trees." A feature of the design for Hua Tung was the need to use efficient modern techniques of production in relation to traditional ideas that consume labor, time, and resources. Coming to power in 1949, the communist authorities dismissed Christian missionary groups and consequently the Hua Tung campus was never realized. For Pei, while he downplayed his role in the project, his subsequent design for the Tunghai University campus in Taiwan, developed in collaboration with Chen Chi-Kwan and Chang Chao-Kang, realized many of the ideas proposed for Hua Tung.

## D

## The National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, the Industrial Design Centre (IDC), Mumbai, and the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design), Ulm

In the decades after Indian independence, the development of design education drew on modernist sources, including the Bauhaus. This was largely through the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG, School of Design) in Ulm, West Germany, where many Bauhaus graduates and former masters taught and developed the school's curriculum after the Second World War. In India, the government played a prominent role in the life of its citizens, and design was part of the larger project of nation-building. This presentation of the National Institute of Design includes the following elements—a hexagonal display structure with images from NID and Ulm (with material taken from the blog *Design for India* by M. P. Ranjan, an academic associated with NID), tables with design projects from NID, a reading area, and films.

### D1

Introduction of Modern Design in India

A public discourse around modern design was initiated in India by two English-language journals: *Marg,* published from 1946 to the present, and *Design,* published from 1957 until 1988. *Marg* focused mainly on architecture and urban planning, while *Design* covered industrial design, advertising, graphics, ceramics, and textiles. Other sources included exhibitions such as MoMA's *Design Today in Europe and America,* objects from which have become part of NID's Archive.

### Design for India

Establishment of the National Institute of Design

*The India Report*—written in 1958 by American designers Charles and Ray Eames at the invitation of the government—outlined the rationale and institutional mechanism for introducing modern design in India. This report resulted in the creation of the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, established in 1961, followed in 1969 by the Industrial Design Centre (IDC) at the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai.

**Bamboo Cube Stool**
**M. P. Ranjan, no date**

National Institute of
Design Archive, Ahmedabad

### Design for India

Projects and prototypes from NID were designed specifically for the Indian public and consumer, and included product designs, corporate visual identity, and exhibitions—all subjects that were taught and practiced at NID.

### HfG Ulm and Design Schools in India

Defining the new profession of "designer," HfG Ulm (established in 1953) developed specific classes in urban planning, visual design, product design, filmmaking, and architecture. From the 1960s, the National Institute of Design (NID) and the Industrial Design Centre (IDC) developed a strong connection with HfG Ulm. This included Otl Aicher's study tour in India, Hans Gugelot's visit to NID, curriculum development for the NID through the collaboration between Gugelot, Herbert Lindinger, and NID's first teacher, H. Kumar Vyas, and Ulm graduate Sudhakar Nadkarni's key role at the IDC. A response to the Indian context can be seen in sketches made by Aicher during his visit to the subcontinent in 1960, as well as in Nadkarni's 1966 Ulm Diploma project, featuring a milk kiosk conceived for use in urban centers.

### Foundation Program, National Institute of Design

This exchange between the schools created similarities in aesthetics, system design principles, and workshop environments as well as in teaching methods, but particularly in the Bauhaus-influenced foundation courses of the three schools. However, among the revisions made to the foundation course at NID was the addition of environmental research, including ethnographic studies of subjects such as craft, and vernacular architecture, as well as city and village life.

D2

## Design Projects at the National Institute of Design

The industrial design and visual-communication projects executed by faculty members reveal their strong emphasis on securing a good "standard of living" and projecting the image of a modernizing, forward-looking nation. Both NID and IDC understood design as a catalyst for economic growth and a development tool. Through fieldwork, trainee designers attempted to utilize the traditions and knowledge of Indian handicrafts and vernacular objects in the development of modern design, bringing them to contemporary markets. These include research into bamboo as a sustainable material for the future, stoves based on traditional models, and the use of khadi cloth for contemporary fashion. These ideas, debated at the UNESCO–UNIDO "Design for Development" conference in 1979, led to the Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development.

D3

## Two Films: *Lota* and *Jawaja Project*

Two films underline the ways in which modern design is anchored in traditional craft practices in India, while seeking simultaneously to revitalize them both for present-day audiences. The film *Lota,* based on *The India Report* written by Charles and Ray Eames in 1958, outlines an idea of design for postcolonial India derived from values distilled from the form and function of the humble pot. The *Jawaja Project* realizes the hope expressed in the *Lota* film, describing the transformation of a vanishing leather crafts industry through the joint efforts of designers from NID and managers from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Ahmedabad.

D4

## References

Books, journals, and reading material from NID, IDC, and HfG Ulm.

E

## Zvi Efrat, *Scenes fom the Most Beautiful Campus in Africa*

In his film, *Scenes fom the Most Beautiful Campus in Africa*, the architect and architectural historian Zvi Efrat documents and explores the planning and design of the Ife University campus (now known as Obafemi Awolowo University) in Nigeria, by the Israeli architect Arieh Sharon. Founded in 1960 in protest against British colonial education policy, Ife was the first post-independence university in Nigeria to possess an architecture faculty. Arieh Sharon trained at the Bauhaus school in Dessau and worked at the architectural office of Hannes Meyer in Berlin for the design of the Trade Union School in Bernau before he returned to Palestine in 1931. There, he became the leading architect of the local Trade Union Federation and in 1948 he was appointed head of Israel's State Planning Authority. His involvement with the Ife campus spanned about two and a half decades, from 1960 until the mid-1980s, and was part of Israel's development aid program.

Sharon's adaptation of modernist-brutalist idioms to the local Yoruba culture, and his radical interpretation of British tropical architecture, created a rare ensemble of climatically sustainable open structures and flowing spaces; in effect "architecture without doors," operating as a vibrant social and academic environment up to the present time.

In relation to contemporary architectural discourse and practice, the Ife campus can be appreciated as a moderately intricate model of "passive architecture" and "soft spaces," one that does not rely principally on external energy and mechanical systems and which blurs the habitual boundaries between interior and exterior, formal and informal spaces.

University of Ife
(Obafemi Awolowo University)
Ile-Ife, Osun, Nigeria
Late 1960s
Architects: Arieh Sharon
and Eldar Sharon

Arieh Sharon Digital Archive,
the Yael Aloni collection

F

## Alice Creischer, *For Tolziner*

Artist Alice Creischer responds to the biography of Bauhaus architect Philipp Tolziner in a sculptural installation. The installation investigates two different strands in Tolziner's life: The use of cane refers to his earlier training as a wicker furniture maker, and the concrete house refers to his experiences as an architect. Creischer also explores Tolziner's tragic relationship with communism. As a Bauhaus student, he had been involved in the construction of the balcony-access housing blocks at the Törten housing estate in Dessau and the Trade Union School in Bernau, before leaving Germany for the Soviet Union with Hannes Meyer in 1931. Here, Philipp Tolziner and his Bauhaus colleagues Konrad Püschel and Tibor Weiner joined with the former Ernst May Brigade members Lotte Beese, Mart Stam, Hans Schmidt, and others to design the city of Orsk. Arrested in 1938 during the Stalinist purges, Tolziner survived incarceration in the Usol'lag labor camp in Solikamsk, near Perm, in the Urals. His attempts to move to East Germany (GDR) failed and so he never left the Soviet Union, working instead in the Urals—and later in Moscow—on housing projects.

A compilation of texts with quotes from Tolziner accompanies the installation, and brings together heterogeneous perspectives on communism.

F1

## Documents from the Tolziner Estate

The seven Bauhaus graduates under Hannes Meyer's directorship who went to Moscow were René Mensch, Klaus Meumann, Konrad Püschel, Béla Scheffler, Philipp Tolziner, Antonin Urban, and Tibor Weiner. Béla Scheffler and Antonin Urban died in the Soviet Gulag system, and probably Klaus Meumann as well. Tibor Weiner went to Switzerland in 1933, and then to France and Chile, where he worked as an architect and educator. Born in Budapest, he later established himself in Hungary where, in 1950, he led the planning of the city of Sztálinváros (renamed Dunaújváros). Konrad Püschel had no choice but to return to Germany, and after the war he remained in the GDR where he became a professor in Weimar. René Mensch later worked as an architect in Iran, Chile, and Switzerland. Philipp Tolziner never left the Soviet Union. Documents in this slideshow are from Philipp Tolziner's private Bauhaus archive created in his apartment in Moscow, which he donated to the Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin in 1996.

**“Die erste Aufbauperiode der sozialistischen Stadt Orsk im Ural”**
**(The first construction period of the socialist city of Orsk in the Urals)**
**Konrad Püschel, 1967**

in: *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar*, vol. 14, no. 5, p. 455

Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin

G

## The Internationalist Architect: Hannes Meyer

Hannes Meyer was already known in Soviet architectural circles as a radical modernist thanks to the constructivist Society of Contemporary Architects (OSA). They presented Meyer's projects alongside those by Walter Gropius at the *First Exhibition of Contemporary Architecture* in Moscow in 1927. Having obtained an invitation from the Soviet government, Meyer moved to Moscow in the fall of 1930 where he remained until 1936, working for several institutions. In 1934, hired by the Soviet Architecture Academy (WAA) in Moscow, Meyer worked in the office for "Housing, Social Construction and Interior Decoration" (Kabinett für Wohnungswesen, Gesellschaftsbauten und Inneneinrichtung). Here, he worked with local architectural brigades on the problem of the Soviet dwelling, also including German and Austrian architects like Antonin Urban, Hans Schmidt, and Grete Schütte-Lihotzky. The main idea of Meyer's master plan for Moscow, which he developed between 1931 and 1932 along with the architect Peer Bücking and the Soviet urban planner Israel Geimanson, was to turn Moscow into a modern metropolis by dispersing the existing city and its entire road system. In the Soviet Union, Meyer deepened his knowledge of Marxist-Leninist ideology and performed the role of a public figure on the architectural scene in Moscow and elsewhere on the world stage. In Mexico in the 1940s, Meyer started to reflect openly on his socialist ideals in architecture and his approach to design based on life and environmental analysis. Such reflections included writing, editing, publishing, and collecting books on social housing and urbanism. Meyer was also involved in anti-fascist activities. In 1943 he became the editor of *El libro negro del terror nazi en europa* (The black book of Nazi terror in Europe), which was published by the Austrian-German publishing house el libro libre in Mexico City.

H

## CIAM 4: The Architects' Congress

Founded in La Sarraz, Switzerland, in 1928, the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) led the discussions on urban planning and the development of modern architecture that continued into the postwar period. Eminent personalities included the art historian Sigfried Giedion, the architects Le Corbusier, Cornelis van Eesteren, José Luis Sert, and Ernst May, and the Bauhaus director Walter Gropius. The focus of the congress shifted over the years from social housing and the standardization of dwellings (CIAM 2: "The Minimum Dwelling," Frankfurt am Main, 1929) to the economic planning of large settlements (CIAM 3: "Rational Building Schemes," Brussels, 1930), culminating logically in the analysis of the whole city (CIAM 4: "The Functional City," Athens, 1933). The results of the fourth congress later led to the codification of the basic principles of modern urban planning in the manifesto written primarily by Le Corbusier, *Charte d'Athènes (Athens Charter)* (1943). The differentiation of the four essential functions—of housing, work, leisure, and transport, which would have a major impact on urban planning in the future, was also recognized at the congress. The cancellation of the 4th CIAM congress, initially planned to take place in Moscow in March 1933, was due to a conflict that arose after the announcement of the results of the competition for the Palace of the Soviets in 1931/32 and the two letters of protest the CIAM leadership sent to Stalin. Thus, as if the modernist avant-garde had no homeland, it decided to debate its principles on board a ship travelling from Marseille to Athens. On this journey—reflected in a film by László Moholy-Nagy—different groups presented new forms of analysis on the city, including a study of Dessau by Bauhaus students under the directorship of Ludwig Hilberseimer and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

I

## Doreen Mende, *Hamhung's Two Orphans (To Konrad Püschel)*

The research display, *Hamhung's Two Orphans (To Konrad Püschel),* developed by the curator, theoretician, and writer Doreen Mende, articulates a chronopolitical layering to narrate the geopolitical conditions of rebuilding the city of Hamhung in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea after the Korean War (1950–53). The reconstruction of the North Korean city followed the master plan of Konrad Püschel from the GDR who had studied architecture and urban planning at the Bauhaus in Dessau since 1927, before following Meyer to Moscow and Orsk up until 1937. The research project engages in elements from various sources, including the 1954 Geneva Conference, Nikita Khrushchev's paradigmatic speech on the industrialization of construction in Moscow, Konrad Püschel's photo-documentation of his stay in North Korea from 1955 to 1959, and contemporary approaches to a *détente* in the divided country. Partly revisualized by the artist Aarti Sunder due to archive restrictions, the visual material is brought into a constellation with texts by Samia Henni, Young-Sun Hong, Dong-Sam Sin, Kurt Liebknecht, Brigitte Reimann, Ines Weizman, among others about the actual construction in Hamhung, debates on the role of architecture and the Bauhaus in the GDR, the Cold War, and the figure of imperialism after 1945. *Hamhung's Two Orphans,* which borrows its title from a chapter of the cine-essay *Coréennes* (1959) by Chris Marker, proposes to trace the transformation of the Bauhaus's relevance from its prewar internationalist modernity into elements of the GDR's socialist internationalism when architecture operated as a state-crafting instrument during the global Cold War.

J

## Wendelien van Oldenborgh, *Two Stones*

Artist and filmmaker Wendelien van Oldenborgh shows a new film as a site-specific installation in which she explores the significance of both Bauhaus-trained architect Lotte Stam-Beese and writer, editor, and fighter-for-equality Hermine Huiswoud. Both Stam-Beese's thoughts on housing and Huiswoud's struggles for racial and class equality were approached through the ideals and practices of communism. Though they never met, both women experienced life in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s and ended up influencing public life in the Netherlands in the 1950s.

Van Oldenborgh focuses on two significant locations: The constructivist neighborhood of KhTZ (a Tractor Plant) in Kharkiv, Ukraine—for which Stam-Beese was part of the Soviet design team in the 1930s—and the acclaimed 1950s Pendrecht district in Rotterdam, which introduced Stam-Beese's ideas for social housing. The film work superimposes these two locations as well as both women's legacies—showing resonances and dissonances in their ideals and life experiences through the images and voices of contemporary inhabitants and related protagonists. The result is a collage in which sound, text, and image are radically separated and then reassembled.

Still Undead

# Introduction

The Bauhaus object for the chapter *Still Undead* is Kurt Schwerdtfeger's *Reflektorische Farblichtspiele* (Reflecting color-light plays) from 1922. Producing a combination of moving abstract shadows, light forms, and sound, it emerged as a creative development at the Bauhaus from outside the curriculum. As the starting point for this chapter, the *Farblichtspiele* opens up numerous strands for consideration, including the Bauhaus parties, performances, experiments with light, the artist as engineer, as well as new media and commercial design. Schwerdtfeger's apparatus and similar works that followed it at the Bauhaus have also been an important reference for expanded cinema, pointing to a future in which sound, experimental film, and digital culture would all form part of the contemporary art scene.

*Still Undead* traces a chronology of artistic experiments with new technologies that have emerged from academic institutions, including the New Bauhaus in Chicago, the Center for Advanced Visual Studies and Media Lab at the MIT, as well as the sound and performance workshops at Leeds School of Art. This chapter explores how these innovations from within the context of academia led to collaborations with industry and commerce as well as spilling over into the fields of digital technology, art, popular and counterculture. In this way, *Still Undead* shows how in the context of the postwar societies of the United States, Great Britain, and Germany, artistic experimentation transcended institutional structures on the one hand, while on the other, it was integrated into them. Today, creative innovation and countercultural resistance all too easily are directed toward economic profit through the marketing of products and social environments. The blurring of the borders between experimentation, institutionalization, and commercialization, which was already characteristic of the Bauhaus, has now become the norm. This tendency, to merge resistant experimental practices into consumption, emphasizes the necessity for the re-politicization of art, technology, and popular culture today.

Josef Albers
Gertrud Arndt
Bauhaus (Band)
Robyn Beeche
Muriel Cooper
Brian Eno
T. Lux Feininger
Mort & Millie Goldsholl
Kasper de Graaf & Malcolm Garrett
Brion Gysin & Ian Sommerville
George Hinchliffe & Ian Wood
Kenneth Josephson
György Kepes
Kurt Kranz
Al MacDonald
László Moholy-Nagy
Nam June Paik
*New Sounds New Styles*
Oskar Schlemmer
Kurt Schwerdtfeger
Soft Cell
Frank Tovey
Edith Tudor-Hart
Stan VanDerBeek
Andy Warhol

A
Gegenstand

Kurt Schwerdtfeger,
*Reflektorische Farblichtspiele,* 1922

The "light plays," projected from inside handmade apparatus, equipped with lamps and cutout forms and manually moved back and forth by performers, produced a variety of colorful abstract shadow patterns on the front surface of the screen. Kurt Schwerdtfeger premiered his *Reflektorische Farblichtspiele* at a party held at the home of Wassily Kandinsky in 1922. Originally conceived for the Lantern Festival, the light plays utilize a large cube-projection apparatus in which performers activate cardboard shapes and a switchboard of colored lights to form live complexly abstract shadow plays. As helper to Schwerdtfeger, his fellow Bauhaus student, Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack accidentally created a double shadow effect while changing a light bulb. Fascinated by this discovery, in the following years he experimented with multiple light sources and colored glass plates in order to multiply this effect. Schwerdtfeger's *Farblichtspiele* shows strong parallels with the first of the early abstract film experiments, live performances, expanded cinema, and kinetic sculptures. The artist oversaw the restaging of the performance himself in Darmstadt in 1966. In 2016 the Microscope Gallery in New York, in the frame of a series of events as part of the exhibition *Dreamlands: Immersive Cinema and Art, 1905–2016* at the Whitney Museum, also in New York, featured a newly built apparatus and visual score, shown here in the exhibition. Based on the 1966 presentation as well as the available original documentation, this rendition of the *Reflektorische Farblichtspiele* performance formed part of a series of expanded cinema events, also organized by the Microscope Gallery. This reconstruction is shown as part of *bauhaus imaginista* at HKW with a performance at the opening and presentation of the light plays in the exhibition.

*Reflektorische Farblichtspiele*
(Reflecting color-light plays)
Kurt Schwerdtfeger, 1922
Color-light plays, apparatus,
reconstructed in 2016

Courtesy Microscope Gallery
and Kurt Schwerdtfeger Estate © 2016

B

# Experiments with Light

Design works employing light refraction, fixation, and reflection were already a feature of László Moholy-Nagy's teaching at the Bauhaus, where he expressly promoted the new technical media of photography and film. From 1937, the experiments with colored light and visual communication were continued under his direction at the New Bauhaus in Chicago. The New Bauhaus drew extensively from Bauhaus teachings; one of its greatest achievements was the research into photography carried out in the Light and Color Workshop, directed by the film and photo artist György Kepes. Here, primarily through the employment of abstract forms, new imaging processes were developed along with photography and film as artistic mediums. In their research, practical-artistic, and pedagogic work at the New Bauhaus, Moholy-Nagy and Kepes pursued the interrelationship between art and imaging technologies. With their extensive writings, they decisively influenced the development of a theory of the visual and established the foundations for a conception of visual communication. Both artists also embraced mass culture, understanding it as a field of activity for the modern artist. American pop culture did not restrict experiments with light to advertising: in the 1960s, light was employed as a medium for consciousness-expanding experiences and also found its way into the experimental film movement of expanded cinema.


*Radio Shack, Washington Street, between Court Street and Cornhill Street*
György Kepes, Kevin Lynch, and Nishan Bichajian (photographer)
ca. 1954–59

B1

László Moholy-Nagy,
*Ein Lichtspiel schwarz weiss grau*,
1930

At the Bauhaus, László Moholy-Nagy conducted practical and theoretical research into the possibilities of optical media and the use of light as a contemporary design element. The central object of his artistic experiments is the *Lichtrequisit Licht-Raum-Modulator* (Light prop light-space modulator), a rotating kinetic light sculpture which would form the centerpiece of the planned "Raum der Gegenwart" (Room of the present)—a spatial environment designed to represent modernity's artistic achievements from information display to new media communication. The *Lichtrequisit Licht-Raum-Modulator* was used to create *Ein Lichtspiel schwarz weiss grau* (A light play black white gray), a film that shows the mechanical apparatus in motion, generating a dynamic interplay between projection and shadow, transparency and materiality.

B2

Kurt Kranz,
*schwarz : weiß / weiß : schwarz,*
1928/29

Following an encounter with László Moholy-Nagy, the lithographer Kurt Kranz applied to the Bauhaus with the series *schwarz : weiß / weiß : schwarz* (black : white / white : black), in order to develop abstract film experiments. However, Moholy-Nagy left the Bauhaus before realization of his planned laboratory for experimentation in film. As film material was too expensive to use during the Depression, Kranz started making his abstract-form sequences with paper instead; now the seriality, algorithmic composition, and variation of these paper works became a principle of his endeavors. In *schwarz : weiß / weiß : schwarz,* the play of forms is reduced to the factors of light and dark. In the film realized at the University of Fine Arts, Hamburg, in 1972, this becomes a graphic animation of light and shadow in movement.

B3

Edith Tudor-Hart, *Ultraviolet Light Treatment, South London Hospital for Women and Children,* ca. 1935

Edith Tudor-Hart (1908–73) attended the Bauhaus in Dessau where she studied photography with Walter Peterhans. She moved to her hometown Vienna and worked as a photographer, but as a committed communist, also acted as an agent for the Soviet Union. She fled with her British husband to London in 1934, where she joined the Workers Camera Club, the activities of which included staging the exhibition *Artists against Fascism and War*. Turning to documentary photography she saw the camera as a political weapon. She used photography to comment on the conditions of the poor, focusing on life in London's East End and the coal mining communities of South Wales. That said, the British class system fascinated László Moholy-Nagy also; during his time in England, he documented working-class street markets as well as students from the exclusive independent boarding school Eton College. The photograph by Tudor-Hart depicts children undergoing experimental ultraviolet light treatment at a London hospital.

B4

György Kepes, Light Murals and *Language of Vision*

György Kepes never taught at the historical Bauhaus, however, he did work closely with László Moholy-Nagy and collaborate with him in Berlin and in London. Moholy-Nagy brought Kepes to the New Bauhaus in Chicago in 1937 where the latter directed the Light and Color Workshop. In 1945, Kepes transferred to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where initially he taught Visual Design in the Department of Architecture. With books such as *Language of Vision* and *The New Landscape in Art and Science* and the series of publications titled *Vision + Value*, Kepes developed groundbreaking approaches to the interdisciplinary fusion of art, science, engineering, and society. His central concern was to make the pedagogic benefits of visual design, communication, and culture available to a wider public. Light as a democratic medium was the focus of Kepes' artistic experiments. In Boston, he installed a programmable light work, *Kinetic Outdoor Light Mural for Radio Shack*, which projected

scientific design vocabulary into the urban public space. With the term "Civic Art," which Kepes termed, he developed a concept in which art was to play a central role in the education and emancipation of society.

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B5

Andy Warhol, *The Velvet Underground in Boston,* 1967

In the 1960s, a generation of experimental filmmakers and theorists in the United States rediscovered the kaleidoscopic-light and synesthetic works of the avant-garde of the 1920s. This they did at the same time as a broader public was becoming aware of neuroscientific and cybernetic insights into brain waves and sensory impressions. Andy Warhol's 1967 film, *The Velvet Underground in Boston*, documented a multimedia performance of his project *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, with a live performance by The Velvet Underground, including a sophisticated light show with manipulable overhead projectors, disco ball, mirrored tiles, and stroboscopic light.

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B6

Brion Gysin and Ian Sommerville, *Dreamachine,* 1961

Back in 1961, the beat generation poets Brion Gysin and Ian Sommerville had developed their *Dreamachine,* a cylinder containing a light bulb whose outer wall, punctured with slits, was set rotating on a record player at 45 or 75 revolutions per minute. The *Dreamachine*'s stroboscopic effect generated an enhanced sense of vision behind the eyelids, termed *superimpositions* by the filmmaker Jonas Mekas, and which could induce a form of trance. The New York underground scene's liberation of the filmic, on stages, in music clubs and discos, met the pop-cultural search for self-delimitation, triggered by light stimuli and consciousness-expanding drugs. With flickering lights and the stroboscope, the beat and pop generation radicalized lighting design, transforming it into a new technology of the subject.

C

## Marketing, Mass Culture, Critique

In the United States, corporate interests, the industrial-military complex, and new urban planning schemes all had an effect on emerging institutions. Coming directly from public and private commissions, designers nevertheless took advantage of them to create new visual languages in the space between commercialism and art. László Moholy-Nagy had already engaged with commercial projects during his time in London between 1935 and 1937, including posters for the London Underground and window displays for the department store Simpsons of Piccadilly. In 1937 he founded the New Bauhaus in Chicago, which reopened in 1939 as the Chicago School of Design, in 1944 it was renamed the Institute of Design, and today it is part of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). Artistic developments at the New Bauhaus and the IIT could be integrated into the war effort with designs for camouflage, into the consumer society of the 1950s and 1960s through commissions for the Eastman Kodak Company, but also into critical practices addressing the public sphere through the language of film—the latter two from the photography department. At the IIT's Institute of Design, annual conferences addressed how design schools might cooperate with businesses to explore how design could leverage emergent market opportunities. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the ideas of the Bauhaus and György Kepes' engagement informed projects in both the commercial and public sectors, including in a later phase, developments in data visualization. In the 1970s, MIT's Center for Advanced Studies encouraged students to work with new developments in the emergent field of computer graphics. Students in the Visual Language Workshop of the school's Media Lab engaged with digital design, and in the 1980s, the designer Muriel Cooper alongside her colleagues paved the way for the information landscape of today, where the fluidity of digital text and image have become ubiquitous. In 1969, the year Muriel Cooper designed the book *Bauhaus, Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago,* she also designed the visual identity for MIT Press, which remains in use to this day.


Muriel Cooper with Suguru Ishizaki,
David Small, and students
in the Visible Language Workshop,
still from *Information Landscapes*
Cambridge, Massachusetts
1994

Courtesy Visible Language Workshop Archive
MIT Program in Art,
Culture and Technology (ACT)

## C1

## Commercialization and Critique

Teaching at the New Bauhaus and its successor institution from 1944, the Institute of Design in Chicago (IIT) fused art, architecture, urban planning, and design with science, engineering, psychology, marketing communication, and political-military applications. László Moholy-Nagy's film, *Work of the Camouflage Class*, shows the results of a seminar held by Moholy-Nagy and György Kepes at the New Bauhaus, where optical research informed the creation of the graphic and architectonic concepts of military camouflage developed for the United States during the Second World War. Commercial applications followed on from the education offered at IIT. Millie and Morton Goldsholl, working at the interface of experimental film and advertising, employ a complex range of cinematic instruments in the film *"Worth How Many Words"* (1968), produced for the Eastman Kodak Company. Here, the optical-technological possibilities both fascinate and bewilder while also pointing to the potential for media manipulation and propaganda. Meanwhile Kenneth Josephson's experimental film, *33rd and LaSalle* (1962), produced while he was a student at the IIT, considers the omnipresence of advertising in the urban space from a critical perspective. The demolition of a building with advertising posters on it plays out in front of the camera lens, generating a *mise en abyme* as a critique of the capitalization of public space.

## C2

## Muriel Cooper, From *Bauhaus* to *Information Landscapes*

In 1969, 50 years after the founding of the Bauhaus and almost simultaneously with the foundation of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS), MIT Press published the English edition of *Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago* edited by Hans Maria Wingler. It became standard reading in American art, design, and architecture departments. Muriel Cooper, the designer of the MIT Press logo, was responsible for the publication's graphic design. She worked on the *Bauhaus* book for over two years, establishing new fonts such as Helvetica, and new graphic principles based, among other things, on standardization and grid patterns, systematization and cybernetics. Even after its

publication, she experimented with translation of the book's data into other media in a series of posters and in an experimental film that compressed the layout into a rapid sequence.

Inspired in addition by the Bauhaus workshops, Cooper founded the Visible Language Workshop (VLW) at MIT. Working closely with her students on the uses of graphic design, she was one of the first to initiate experimentation with computer-generated graphics, digital printing processes, and algorithmic design systems. In the early 1990s, she developed a dynamic three-dimensional data environment with her students: *Information Landscapes* is a pioneering work of computer typography for the organization of digital knowledge, which anticipates an intuitive navigation system for negotiating the immense volumes of information in the future networked society.

## D The Artist-Engineer

"The reality of our century is technology: the invention, construction and maintenance of machines," wrote László Moholy-Nagy as early as 1922. He was convinced that the synthesis of art and life, science and technology would generate new forms of knowledge and insights, and that a new design subject would emerge which would be capable of overcoming the opposition between technical and artistic practice. His experimental program with its constructivist affinities and his standpoint that in principle every person can be creative, continued to exert an influence in the 1940s at the New Bauhaus and the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Through the work of György Kepes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the founding of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS), this vision of an artist-engineer took on concrete form. For the first time, Kepes brought filmmakers and visual artists like Stan VanDerBeek and Nam Jun Paik to the MIT and called for an exchange between art, technology, and science, which continues to this day as the MIT Media Lab. Another reading of this heritage from a pop-culture perspective is emphasized by formations such as Kraftwerk in postwar West Germany, which appropriated the ambivalence of Kepes and Moholy-Nagy's artist-engineer concept for the development of new forms of music technologies, sounds, and performance. In the 1970s, the use of analogue vocoders, manipulated audio tapes, self-built instruments, and synthesizers developed new sound forms such as ambient, which paved the way for today's electronic music. The creation of the interdisciplinary polytechnics in Great Britain from the mid-1960s, which intended to desegregate art and industry, and which incorporated art schools such as Leeds School of Art with its sound facilities, in principle at least, also opened the doors for artists to experiment with technologies in the production of sound art and electronic music.

Nam June Paik
ca. 1982


Photograph: Roger N. Goldstein

## D1

## The Center for Advanced Visual Studies

As early as 1947, as a guest lecturer, György Kepes directed courses on visual design at the MIT. Here, he founded the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS), in 1967, with the goal of promoting cooperation with neighboring disciplines. At CAVS, artists such as Nam June Paik, Stan VanDerBeek, Carolee Schneemann, and Otto Piene, but also visiting artists such as Yvonne Rainer, experimented with new image machines, forms of interactive performative art in public spaces, as well as initiating experimentation with digital image processing. Electronic devices, frequencies, waves, and signals were translated into artistic works using televisions, video cameras, and computer graphics. With the term "Civic Art," coined by Kepes himself, he developed a concept in which a techno-experimental form of art production was to play a central role in the education and emancipation of American society.

## D2

## From Bauhaus to Kraftwerk

Sound was already part of the apparatus of the Reflecting color-light plays performed by Kurt Schwerdtfeger and Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack. Along with the Weimar Bauhaus master Gertrud Grunow, a specialist in twelve-tone music and synesthetic pedagogy, Hirschfeld-Mack participated in the Second Congress for Color-Sound Research, Hamburg, in 1930, which was a seminal event in modernist experimental music performance and theory. The new music avant-garde movement was already present at the Bauhaus in the 1920s.

Early in the 1970s, as they express in interviews, the German band Kraftwerk went "back to the Bauhaus school" and the marriage of art and technology to break down barriers between the artist and the engineer. Their analogue and electronic sound experiments, already experienced earlier in their first albums *Kraftwerk 1* and *Kraftwerk 2*, took a further step forward in their famous *Autobahn* album from 1974 in which their visuals also addressed the ambivalences of the German-modernist techno-utopia of the Bauhaus, the Third Reich, and Fordism in postwar West Germany. Engaging with the experimental practice of using and reusing technology and electronica as well as embracing seriality, Kraftwerk paved the way for today's electronic music.

## D3 | Leeds School of Art

In the early 1970s, the painter Patrick Heron described the city of Leeds as having "the most influential art school in Europe since the Bauhaus." However, without direct transmission through émigré masters and students, British art schools received and debated Bauhaus teaching vicariously and in relation to diverse artistic and policy agendas. Emerging in the 1950s, Basic Design, a British variant of the foundation course rooted in the Bauhaus *Vorkurs* (preliminary course), was taught by artist-educators including Richard Hamilton at Newcastle and Harry Thubron at Leeds. The British government's merging of different schools into larger, multidisciplinary polytechnics, with the aim of aligning art and design teaching more closely with business and technology, also evoked a Bauhaus precedent. Patrick Nuttgens, the then-Director of Leeds Polytechnic wrote that Walter Gropius' insistence on "The fundamental unity underlying all branches of design" now might be realized, "on a scale he could not envisage." Yet, the economic and cultural situation in Great Britain in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and in the context of post-punk, meant that students subverted these intentions. Sound and performance facilities were used to create experimental audio compositions such as those by artist duo Hinchcliffe and Wood, or to record soundscapes that ultimately led to the electro-pop of acts like Soft Cell or Fad Gadget. Marxism, feminism, anti-racism, and anti-fascism variously informed art school bands like Scritti Politti, The Mekons, and Delta 5, yet the Bauhaus legacy was more likely to be refracted or mutated through an appreciation of David Bowie's *Berlin Trilogy* or the artist-engineer approach of Kraftwerk than a close reading of Paul Klee's pedagogical notebooks.

## D3.1 | Soft Cell's "Bedsit Tapes"

Marc Almond and Dave Ball met while art students at Leeds and formed the band Soft Cell, making recordings in the polytechnic sound studio, their "Bedsit Tapes," and performing their first gig at a Fine Art end-of-year party. The band established an electronic synth-pop sound combined with visuals and lyrics exploring themes of androgyny, deviant sexuality, and makeshift glamour, coming to public attention in 1981 with their

hit single “Tainted Love” and album *Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret*. An experimental art school context provided space to explore subject positions and invent musical forms without strict adherence to the notion of curriculum. Hence, creative energy was invested in ways that blurred formal art school teaching with extracurricula activity, leading some bands at Leeds to argue that their pop musical output was art and should be marked as coursework.

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D3.2

## Frank Tovey / Fad Gadget

At Leeds, Frank Tovey began using an old Grundig tape recorder, manipulating its functions of record and erase, to produce sound collages as audio soundtracks for performances. Tovey’s graduation project at Leeds, “Berg,” based on the novel by Ann Quin, included an elaborate score and a specially recorded soundtrack that featured Tovey in dialogue with a ventriloquist’s puppet. Ideas about sound, performance, puppetry, and masks appear in his extensive college research. Frank Tovey went on to achieve fame as the avant-garde electronic musician and vocalist called Fad Gadget, whose public performances featured dramatic lighting, body paint, synthesizers, and the acoustics of found objects including drills and electric razors.

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D3.3

## George Hinchliffe and Ian Wood, *Dehbye,* 1978

George Hinchliffe and Ian Wood, who met at Leeds School of Art, experimented with sounds and noise, readymade materials and installations. As did Brian Eno, who studied Basic Design with Roy Ascott.

Hinchliffe and Wood developed a form of sound art, investigating sound loop techniques, sequencing, and layering. The work *Dehbye*, created at Leeds School of Art, has been reassembled for this exhibition.

E

# Party, Performance, and Self-Fashioning

Not only was the Bauhaus a school for art, design, and architecture, it was also the experimental site for exploring new ways of living and being. Students of both sexes had the possibility to explore gender roles and envisage the new human through a diverse set of representations. For example, photography, which was the second largest discipline involving women at the Bauhaus, became a field where the female image could be questioned. A deconstruction of masculine roles and a critique of militaristic masculinity can also be seen in the little-known 1924 photomontage by Marcel Breuer, in which he depicts himself as a girl holding a magnolia bud. An enthusiasm for cross-dressing carried over to Black Mountain College, where Josef Albers' documentation of the faculty wearing costumes for the Valentine Ball of 1940 shows an eccentric parade of seeming drag kings and queens. The self-fashioning enacted as part of Bauhaus parties along with the theater workshop's visualization of the human as a masked doll with mechanized movements, resonated with late twentieth-century experimental counterculture, inflected with queer performativity, as in the case of Leigh Bowery. Also in Great Britain, the provocation of punk empowered a new generation at the intersection of youth culture, music, underground clubs, fashion, and graphic design, to create an eclectic identity that borrowed freely from the early twentieth-century avant-garde. The theoretical and historical studies introduced into the art and design school curriculum by the Coldstream Report of 1960 meant that by the late 1970s this generation could enact a postmodern appropriation of historical sources into a do-it-yourself culture, which spilled out onto the street.

*Firebird*, Hair Color,
based on Johannes Itten's Color Theory
Vidal Sassoon, 1981

Image courtesy Vidal Sassoon Archives
Photograph: Robyn Beeche

E1

## Bauhaus Parties, Performance, and the Stage

Walter Gropius had already announced in the first Bauhaus curricula of 1919 that amusing ceremonials and get-togethers would become central to the new school. Bauhaus parties, organized over several weeks by teachers and students from almost all of the Bauhaus workshops, involved designs for lantern parties, dragon parties, and motto parties—such as the "Beard, Nose, and Heart Party" or "Metallic Party." A relationship between the college and the respective cities and the public was encouraged. To create an informal atmosphere, to cultivate a force of creativity through nonpurposeful activity, this was how Oskar Schlemmer understood leisure, planning and using the parties as an experimental stage for his theater workshop. Bauhaus student Lux Feininger captured the louche cabaret-like theatricality at Bauhaus parties and other extramural events in his photographic works. The "masked self-portraits" by Gertrud Arndt, which elegantly dissemble lexicons of gendered identity, transcend the limitations of female representation. The reputation of the Bauhaus and its attraction for international students was largely due to this playful progressiveness, which experimented with many different areas of life. After the Bauhaus closed in 1933 due to pressure from the National Socialists, émigré Bauhaus members, for instance Josef Albers, took the costume parties to Black Mountain College in the United States.

E2

## Vidal Sassoon: Color Theory

The connection between Vidal Sassoon and the Bauhaus comes as both a surprise and a provocation. Sassoon saw his meeting with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in 1961 and a visit to the Seagram Building in New York as the key to his development as a hair artist. It led to his modern haircuts such as the 1963 "Five Point" bob, created for fashion designer Mary Quant, which had a sleek minimalism echoing the reduced geometry of Bauhaus architecture. Sassoon's hairdressing training school drew on Bauhaus pedagogy; he believed students of hairdressing, like students of architecture or design, should be equipped for the modern world with technical, social, economic, and spiritual skills so that they were ready to function in society.

Sassoon's training included experimenting with hair dyes, and reading Johannes Itten's color theory along with other Bauhaus texts. The images in this exhibition by Robyn Beeche and Alan MacDonald show styles in the fields of fashion and design from the early 1980s that also employ the colors and forms invented by British youth culture.

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E3

## Robyn Beeche: Photographing the Scene

Establishing her own London studio in 1977, Australian photographer Robyn Beeche positioned her practice at the intersection of underground club culture and do-it-yourself fashion, art school experimentation and commercial success in the music and fashion industries. Clients included musicians David Bowie and Steve Strange as well as avant-garde fashion designers Body Map, Zandra Rhodes, and Vivienne Westwood. Her photographs range from snapshots of Boy George at the club Blitz in 1979 to theatrically constructed images from the 1980s using elaborate body paint by makeup artists Richard Sharah and Phyllis Cohen. Reflections on Weimar decadence, in handmade costumes and the self-styling of the New Romantics, go hand in hand with the postmodern and eclectic appropriation of early twentieth-century avant-garde art in Beeche's 1987 photograph of Scarlet, in which the model dissolves into a De Stijl geometry. Works that reference the Bauhaus include a commission for Vidal Sassoon inspired by Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadisches Ballett* (Triadic ballet), echoes of which can be seen in Beeche's photographs of the Alternative Miss World Contest and Leigh Bowery's elaborate costumes, and both of which reflect Schlemmer's fascination with masks and puppets.

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E4

## Bauhaus: the Band

The influential post-punk band, Bauhaus, helped invent the musical genre and sartorial style of goth-rock. Formed in 1979, their nine-minute-long debut single "Bela Lugosi's Dead" includes a refrain that has also inspired the title for this exhibition chapter. Originally called Bauhaus 19 after the year the school was founded, band member David Jay explained how the choice of reference sprang from a desire to "strip everything

down" to something straight, functional, and stark to cite the theatrical and visual influence of the Bauhaus. A published interview with the band in the October 1981 "Bauhaus Issue" of *New Sounds New Styles*, features a "triangle, square, circle" graphic throughout. In it, English writer Robert Elms eulogizes the Bauhaus parties and the "Bauhauslers eccentricity of dress and anarchic behaviour" as inspiration for a new wave of music and street fashion. Jay went on to track down the United Kingdom-based Bauhaus émigré René Halkett, and recorded a track with him that fuses the amplified sound of a pocket calculator with Halkett's poetry.

## Project Mediation

### bauhaus-imaginista.org
*Online journal*

*bauhaus-imaginista.org* is an online journal and publishing platform that communicates the results from the research project *bauhaus imaginista*. It includes diverse materials commissioned from artists, curators, art and architecture historians, and theorists working in culture, media, and postcolonial studies, as well as republished research articles. *bauhaus-imaginista.org* is divided into four editions (*Learning From, Moving Away, Corresponding With*, and *Still Undead*), which provide in-depth insights into the thinking behind each chapter and make available to the public a unique resource of research materials.

### bauhaus imaginista
*Catalogue*

Edited by Marion von Osten and Grant Watson

Managing Editor: Jill Winder

Image Editor: Iris Ströbel
Design: Daly & Lyon

Publisher: Thames & Hudson

March 2019

The catalogue documents the international network, range of disciplines, and knowledge diversity that underpin this three-year project. Placing emphasis on the international dissemination and reception of the Bauhaus, the catalogue explores the influence, philosophy, and history of the Bauhaus beyond Germany.

Featuring contributions by artists, historians, cultural theorists, and others, including: Kader Attia, Elissa Auther, Suchitra Balasubrahmanyan, Regina Bittner, Gavin Butt, Helena Čapková, Beatriz Colomina, Anshuman Dasgupta, Magdalena Droste, Zvi Efrat, Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Elvira Espejo, Thomas Flierl, Bené Fonteles, Erin Alexa Freedman, Luca Frei, Anja Guttenberger, Hilde Heynen, Christian Hiller, Tom Holert, Maud Houssais, Yoshimasa Kaneko, Eduard Kögel, Ailton Krenak, Susanne Leeb, Mohamed Melehi, Partha Mitter, László Moholy-Nagy, Wendelien van Oldenborgh, Marion von Osten, Adrian Rifkin, Daniel Talesnik, Paulo Tavares, The Otolith Group, Virginia Gardner Troy, Hiromitsu Umemiya, Melissa Venator, Grant Watson, Mark Wigley, and Zoe Zhang.

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## political imaginista *Conference, March 16, 2019*

The Bauhaus was founded in 1919, shortly after the end of the First World War and the German Revolution. The radical premise of the Bauhaus was the rethinking of art and design as a social project. At the opening conference, scholars and artists from the project *bauhaus imaginista* will address the political dimension of the Bauhaus and its international reception in the context of the global upheavals and political ideologies of the twentieth century, relating them to the social debates of today. Emerging from themes developed in the four chapters, the conference will debate the rise of nationalism, cultural appropriation, the intersection of design, architecture, and politics, as well as the potential for experimental practices to become politicized and commodified.

With: Kader Attia, Suchitra Balasubrahmanyan, Rustom Bharucha, John Blakinger, Beatriz Colomina, Alice Creischer, Sebastian De Line, Iris Dressler, Kodwo Eshun, Thomas Flierl, Christian Hiller, Nataša Ilić, Susanne Leeb, Doreen Mende, Gloria Sutton, Paulo Tavares, and Wendelien van Oldenborgh

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## A New School *Conference and Workshops,* May 11–12, 2019

Starting from the reform-pedagogical approaches of the Bauhaus and twentieth-century international art and design schools, which *bauhaus imaginista* has examined over the last years, the conference will present pedagogical concepts and learning environments and examine the extent to which the historic, newly founded schools are relevant to current developments in art and design education. On what understanding of art and design, society and critique, were these schools based? Is it possible for us to comprehend manual and cognitive learning processes as a social project—beyond the economization of education and the promotion of elites—today? What forms of collective learning and self-organization could be socially relevant in an age of global networking? How can we imagine a twenty-first century art school that is determined by design, collective, research, and activist practices, and forms of knowledge?

With: Bayo Amole, Regine Bittner, Gavin Butt, Demas Nwoko, Toni Maraini, Partha Mitter, Robert Wiesenberger, Mark Wigley, and others.

## Cultural Education
## *Guided Tours, DIY Audio Guide, Workshops, and Schools Project*

On the weekends and by request, curators, experts, and trained guides offer conversations and tours for adults, school groups, and families. An audio guide, accessible using your smartphone, provides insight into the exhibition's four chapters. Within the framework of a workshop over the Easter holidays, young people can learn from experts in the fields of design and the crafts about how to create successful Berlin-made products (and careers) employing knowledge from different cultures. On Students' Day, University of Potsdam students will spend a day with fellow students from other universities; the "Long Night of Ideas" creates space for exchange and encounters at eye level by presenting accessible formats for deaf, visually impaired, and blind visitors (in German). In the school project "Bauhaus Reloaded: Students Design the Future" accompanying the exhibition, students from four schools in Berlin, together with artists, architects, media educators, and educational activists, will examine the extent to which the concepts and practices of the Bauhaus shape their own present, and how they can contribute to an active design for the future.

*Audio Guide*
bauhaus imaginista: Introduction

soundcloud.com/hkw/en_imaginista1

# Cooperation Partners

The exhibition chapter *Corresponding With* was realized with the National Museum of Modern Art (Kyoto) and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin) in collaboration with Helena Čapková (Tokyo, Prague), Anshuman Dasgupta (Santiniketan), Fabienne Eggelhöfer (Berne), Luca Frei (Malmö), Anja Guttenberger (Berlin), Yuko Ikeda (Tokyo), Partha Mitter (London), Jin Motohashi (Kyoto), The Otolith Group (London), and Hiromitsu Umemiya (Kōbe). The exhibition design was developed in collaboration with the artist Luca Frei (Malmö); with wall paintings and displays based on his artistic work *Pedagogical Vehicle*, which can also be seen in the exhibition.

The exhibition chapter *Moving Away* was realized with the China Design Museum (Hangzhou), the Garage / Museum of Contemporary Art (Moscow), and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin) in cooperation with Suchitra Balasubrahmanyan (New Delhi), Tatiana Efrussi (Moscow), Thomas Flierl, Anja Guttenberger, Eduard Kögel (Berlin), Daniel Talesnik (Santiago de Chile/ Munich), and Gao Yuan, Zoe Zhang (Hangzhou). The exhibition design was developed by Kooperative für Darstellungspolitik (Berlin).

The exhibition chapter *Learning From* was realized with SESC Pompéia (São Paulo) and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin) in collaboration with Elissa Auther, Erin Alexa Freedman (New York), Anja Guttenberger (Berlin), Maud Houssais (Rabat), and Luiza Proença (São Paulo). The exhibition design was developed by Kooperative für Darstellungspolitik (Berlin).

The exhibition chapter *Still Undead* was realized with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin) in collaboration with Christian Hiller (Berlin), Nottingham Contemporary, Gavin Butt, and Mariana Meneses Romero (London). The exhibition design was developed by Kooperative für Darstellungspolitik (Berlin).

# Curators

Marion von Osten is a curator, researcher, and writer based in Berlin. Her exhibitions, films and publications reflect radical art and architecture movements within and beyond Europe with a focus on pedagogy, decolonization, migration and neoliberal economies. Research and exhibition projects include *Viet Nam Discourse* (2016–18, with the Center for Post-Colonial Knowledge and Culture (CPKC) at Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart/Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm); *Aesthetics of Decolonization* (2014–16, at the Institute for Theory (ith), at Zurich University of the Arts—ZHDK); *In the Desert of Modernity: Colonial Planning and After* (Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2008/ The Cultural Center Les Abattoirs de Casablanca, 2009); as well as *Projekt Migration* (with Kathrin Rhomberg) at Kunstverein Cologne, initiated by the German Federal Cultural Foundation (2002–06). She has a PhD in Fine Arts from Malmö Art Academy (Sarat Maharaj) and is an honorary professor of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She is a founding member of the Center for Postcolonial Knowledge and Culture (CPKC) and the artist collectives Labor k3000 and kleines postfordistisches Drama, Berlin. Publications include *Transcultural Modernism*, edited with Model House Research Group (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013); *Das Erziehungsbild: Zur visuellen Kultur des Pädagogischen*, edited with Tom Holert (Vienna: Schlebrügge Editor, 2010); *The Colonial Modern: Aesthetics of the Past, Rebellions for the Future*, edited with Tom Avermaete and Serhat Karakayali (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2010).

Grant Watson is a curator, writer and researcher based in London. His work brings artistic and archival materials in relation to contemporary political questions. Recent projects include *How We Behave* with "If I Can't Dance" (Amsterdam), exploring life practices and queer politics through filmed interviews, conducted in cities including London, São Paulo, Mumbai, and Los Angeles and exhibited at The Showroom (London), Nottingham Contemporary, MIMA (Middlesbrough), State of Concept (Athens), the Whitechapel Gallery (London), and Extra City (Antwerp). Other recent curatorial projects include, *Keywords* at Tate Liverpool and the research collaborations *Practice International* at Iniva, the Institute of International Visual Arts (London), Iaspis (Stockholm), and Casco (Amsterdam) and *Tagore, Pedagogy and Contemporary Visual Cultures* (Iniva); both of which address questions of the transnational through art. Watson has also developed several ambitious projects about textiles and textile histories. These include the exhibition *Social Fabric* in 2012 at Iniva (London), Lunds Konsthall (Sweden), and Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum (Mumbai), and at the Zhejiang Art Museum (Hangzhou) and *Textiles Art and the Social Fabric* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (M HKA) in 2009. He was Senior Curator at Iniva, London (2010–14), Curator at M HKA (2006–10), and Curator of Visual Arts at Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2001–06). He has a PhD in Visual Cultures from Goldsmiths, University of London.

# Project Team

## bauhaus imaginista

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Partners abroad are the Goethe-Instituts in China, New Delhi, Lagos, Moscow, New York, Rabat, São Paulo, and Tokyo, as well as Le Cube—Independent Art Room, Rabat, and other institutions. *bauhaus imaginista* is realized in collaboration with the China Design Museum (Hangzhou), the Independent Administrative Institution of National Museum of Art / The National Museum of Modern Art Kyoto, Garage / Museum of Contemporary Art (Moscow), and SESC Pompéia, São Paulo.

Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern presents *bauhaus imaginista* from September 20, 2019, through January 12, 2020.

Nottingham Contemporary presents *bauhaus imaginista: still undead* from September 21 through January 5, 2020.

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