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Examining Exhibition as a Means of Expanding and Promoting Bauhaus Ideology

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Introduction

In his text from 1995, *Bauhaus*, art historian Frank Whitford makes the following assertion: ‘the way our environment looks, the appearance of everything from housing estates to newspapers, is partly the result of a school of art and design founded in Germany in 1919 and closed down by the Nazis in 1933’.¹ The Staatliches Bauhaus, widely known as the Bauhaus, was a German art, design, and architecture school that emphasized the importance of craft within arts education. Founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus originally planted its roots in Weimar, Germany, moving later to Dessau and finally to Berlin where it was closed by the National Socialists in 1933. The Bauhaus was governed by three different directors—Walter Gropius, Hannes Meyer, and Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe—each with their own visions that were often accompanied by acute curriculum shifts.

Walter Gropius, an architect born in Berlin in 1883, founded the Bauhaus with the aim ‘to reimagine the material world to reflect the unity of all the arts’.² In his Proclamation of the Bauhaus published in 1919, Gropius ‘described a utopian craft guild’ which combined architecture, and the traditional fine arts—painting and sculpture—into a ‘single creative expression’.³ Gropius executed this vision with the help of various appointed masters. In her article, ‘The Bauhaus, 1919–1933’, Alexandra Griffith Winton argues that Gropius’s craft-based curriculum was successful in nurturing and turning out ‘artisans and designers capable of

¹ Frank Whitford, *Bauhaus: 154 Illustrations, 16 in Colour* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994).

² Alexandra Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933,” In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–, http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd_bauh.htm (August 2007; last revised October 2016).

³ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

creating useful and beautiful objects' consistent to his vision of a new system of living—a system of redeveloping the material world to reflect the unity of the arts.⁴

In this dissertation, I will argue that the practice of exhibition was, and continues to be, pivotal in the transmission of Bauhaus ideology. There is no debate about the extent to which Bauhaus teachings were boundary pushing or the extent to which its outputs were eye catching. Even still, these products would be severely limited without their global spread—spread made possible through exhibition and display. Upon viewing Bauhaus exhibits, the world was convinced that its mission and instruction techniques were innovative and capable of shifting the way future generations will look to and experience space and craft. Exhibition at, and of the Bauhaus has taken multiple forms since 1919. In presenting my argument, I will be looking towards a variety of exhibition styles, making clear with each one, the transmission of Bauhaus ideology. These exhibition styles include standard museum exhibits, the display of architecture through site visits, performance works, community engagement, and publication. Prior to engaging with these strategies of display, it is important to first understand what is meant by 'bauhaus ideology'. In this introduction, I will be presenting a bit of background information on Bauhaus teaching styles and desired outputs to ensure that the Bauhaus mission and various priorities—as transmitted by these exhibition methods—becomes clear.

In 1919, Gropius recruited Swiss artist and Bauhaus Master, Johannes Itten to the Weimar Bauhaus where he remained until 1923. Itten is credited with establishing the well known Bauhaus preliminary course, an education style that has since become integral to the initial instruction practices of many design institutions around the world. Prior to Itten's intervention, many art schools of the time invited their students to start by focusing on the fine arts and copy works by famous artists. Instead Itten 'encouraged his students to explore their own subjective

⁴ Griffith Winton, "The Bauhaus, 1919–1933."

feelings’ and ‘bring creativity’ as opposed to a demonstration of technical skill or precise replication to design.⁵ His preliminary course was made up of three components: studies of nature and materials (which included colour and form theory), analysis of the old masters, and life drawing.⁶ He included traditional exercises like copying, drawing from memory, repeating forms identically, and drawing spatial situations.⁷ Itten also deviated from tradition and made a name for the Bauhaus preliminary course through practices like physical exercise, ice skating on paper, drawing war, identifying materials by touch, name in mirror writing, making ‘color out of white’, ‘folding a camera bellows’, ‘hole in paper’, and ‘photogram’.⁸ Itten’s preliminary course was often instructed by visual artists and Bauhaus masters such as Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, and Josef Albers.⁹ After their preliminary instruction, Bauhaus students were able to enter specialized workshops of which there were eleven: stagecraft, printing and advertising, photography, stained glass, graphic print shop, metal, sculpture, ceramics, joinery (furniture making and forms of industrial design), wall painting, and weaving.¹⁰

In 1923, Walter Gropius shifted his initial goals with respect to the Bauhaus. Still emphasizing craft in his evolving curriculum, Gropius began to stress the importance of mass production.¹¹ This was perhaps an effort to more directly or quickly reimagine the material world as he had originally hoped to do. Griffith Winton adds that Gropius’s initial aim to unify the arts through craft was somewhat financially impractical and a shift towards industrial production was

⁵ “Johannes Itten's Preliminary Course,” Bauhaus Kooperation, accessed November 14, 2021, <https://www.bauhauskooperation.com/knowledge/the-bauhaus/training/preliminary-course/johannes-ittens-preliminary-course/>.

⁶ “Johannes Itten's Preliminary Course.”

⁷ Bauhaus Archiv, Museum für Gestaltung, *Original Bauhaus: the Centenary Exhibition*, Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 2019, Exhibition catalog.

⁸ Bauhaus Archiv, *Original Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

⁹ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

¹⁰ “Workshops,” Bauhaus Kooperation, accessed November 14, 2021, <https://www.bauhauskooperation.com/knowledge/the-bauhaus/training/workshops/>.

¹¹ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

necessary from a financial standpoint.¹² The Bauhaus adopted the slogan ‘Art to Industry’.¹³ In accordance with this curricular shift, the Bauhaus also moved to Dessau in 1925. The new Bauhaus building (Fig. 1), designed by Gropius contained many features that, according to Griffith Winton, would become ‘hallmarks of modernist architecture, including steel-frame construction, a glass curtain wall, and an asymmetrical, pinwheel plan throughout which Gropius distributed studio, classroom, and administrative space for maximum efficiency and spatial logic’.¹⁴ These architectural precedents will resurface in Chapter 2.

In 1928, Gropius left the Bauhaus and moved to Berlin. He passed the role of Bauhaus director to Hannes Meyer, a Swiss architect. Meyer’s vision for the Bauhaus was consistent with Gropius’s curricular shift in 1923—he focused on mass-producible design that was largely functionalist in nature. In 1929, Meyer brought about his own kind of Bauhaus slogan, or at least a building philosophy that reflected his vision for architecture and the output of the Bauhaus: he claimed his functionalist approach to be ‘die neue Baulehre’ or ‘the new way to build’.¹⁵ With this assertion he stressed architecture as a problem solving and social serving medium without connection to aesthetics or form. He is known for ‘favoring concern for the public good rather than private luxury’ in his designs and in the projects that he brought to the school.¹⁶ In as much as he was influential, Meyer was considered a controversial director. He requested that Marcel Breuer, Herbert Bayer and other longtime masters step down as they emphasized formal approaches that contradicted his vision as a radical functionalist. Meyer feared that the school was becoming too political and that the rise of political ideals within student life would pose a threat to the existence of the school. In 1930, the mayor of Dessau, Fritz Hesse asked Meyer to

¹² Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

¹³ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

¹⁴ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

¹⁵ Hannes Meyer, "bauhaus und gesellschaft" In *Hannes Meyers neue Bauhauslehre: Von Dessau bis Mexiko* edited by Philipp Oswald, 86-90, Berlin, Boston: Birkhäuser, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783035617351-006>

¹⁶ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

step down with the hope that Gropius would return; instead Gropius suggested German architect, Mies van der Rohe.¹⁷

Like Meyer, ‘Mies once again reconfigured the curriculum’, this time ‘with an increased emphasis on architecture’.¹⁸ Van der Rohe did a way with the Bauhaus’s identity as a center of mass production and in some ways brought it back to its roots. In 1931, the Nazi party gained control of Dessau’s city council which forced Van der Rohe to move the school to Berlin where it would carry on in operation until the Nazi secret police closed the Bauhaus once and for all. Interestingly, after being shut down, Van der Rohe and numerous other faculty members wrote to the police protesting the decision. The Bauhaus was permitted to re-open but eventually decided to close as tensions were rising and re-opening seemed unsustainable.¹⁹

Despite changes in location and direction, the mission of the Bauhaus is ultimately a synthesis of the masters’ visions: uniting the arts, solving problems and bettering society through thoughtful design, allowing function and efficiency to dictate form, emphasizing craft over the technical instruction of fine arts. The international spread and reception of the Bauhaus mission is significant even today. It is the reason why modern design institutions continue to incorporate Bauhaus practices into their curriculums. In contemporary society, architects and designers build to accomplish goals and they allow function to guide spatial shape. The global transmission of these Bauhaus ideals is due to the Bauhaus’s diligent exhibition practice and willingness to share their values through display—of artworks in Bauhaus buildings, in museums, and in literature; of architecture; and of performance art.

¹⁷ Richard A. Etlin, *Art, Culture, and Media under the Third Reich* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2002), 291.

¹⁸ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

¹⁹ David A. Spaeth and Kenneth Frampton, *Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 87–93.

Chapter 1: Small + Standard Scale Exhibition

Perhaps the most common understanding of exhibition comes in the form of museum display—hanging or placement of organized works in a gallery setting. As noted in the introduction, this method, a straightforward system of display, is only one small aspect of Bauhaus exhibition. However, it is an extremely important one in terms of shedding light on the creations of Bauhaus students and masters, and allowing for the development of an admirable reputation. Exhibitions of this form function in a kind of snowball effect starting with the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar organized by Walter Gropius—each exhibition inspiring a subsequent exhibition and attempting to reveal or spotlight something new about the school and its creators.

While the first public exhibition at the Bauhaus took place in 1923, the first true exhibition actually took place in July of 1919. This exhibition was ‘internal and private’ and exclusively displayed student work.²⁰ Thankfully, this showing was not open to the public as Gropius was dramatically disappointed with the quality of the pieces, exclaiming, ‘we live in dreadfully chaotic times [...] and this small exhibition is their mirror image’.²¹ He threatened the students claiming that ‘only those who will remain faithful to art *will be those prepared to go hungry for it*’.²² With the fine tuning of workshops, strict admission policies, and a growing expectation for greatness among students, the long anticipated 1923 exhibition, entitled ‘Art and Technics, A New Unity’, open to the public, was a roaring success.²³ Even still, Gropius felt the school was not ready for exhibition. In 1923, the Thuringian Legislative Assembly, or the

²⁰ Whitford, *Bauhaus*, 73.

²¹ Whitford, *Bauhaus*, 73.

²² Whitford, *Bauhaus*, 73.

²³ Whitford, *Bauhaus*, 73.

Landtag, ‘asked for a Bauhaus exhibition—which would serve as a report on what had been accomplished in four years’.²⁴ Gropius would have preferred to postpone the exhibition until later and more mature works had been created—Gropius preferred to exhibit on his own terms.²⁵

It is important to recall, as noted in the introduction, that Gropius shifted his initial goals with respect to the Bauhaus in 1923—Gropius began to stress the importance of mass production in his evolving curriculum while continuing to emphasize craft.²⁶ In an article, ‘Bauhaus Weimar’, published by the bauhaus Kooperation, it is argued that with this shift, ‘a pragmatic, functional approach prevailed’ and ‘there is no doubt that this new direction triggered a rise in productivity as early as the Bauhaus’s Weimar phase, manifested in many design classics such as the famous Bauhaus lamp by Jucker and Wagenfeld’ (Fig. 2).²⁷ Industrial objects like this lamp would have been included in the ‘Art and Technics, A New Unity’ exhibition. This exhibit is significant because, despite a nudge from the local government, the Bauhaus was able to represent itself in the way it wanted to be seen. Collectively, it was able to convey its new direction—mass production—to the public, a direction that would have been extremely modern in terms of its desired output. The Haus am Horn (Fig. 3) is an example of this output: the first Bauhaus structure and ‘the first architectural testimonial to the early Bauhuas in Weimar’.²⁸ This construction was on view as part of the 1923 exhibit—the Haus am Horn is analysed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Other elements of the 1923 exhibition included works in the main Bauhaus building: ‘designs, murals, reliefs in various vestibules, staircases and rooms; international exhibition of

²⁴ Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius, eds., *Bauhaus: 1919–1928* (Boston, MA: Charles T. Branford Company, 1959), 82.

²⁵ Bayer, Gropius, and Gropius, eds., *Bauhaus*, 82.

²⁶ Griffith Winton, “The Bauhaus, 1919–1933.”

²⁷ “Bauhaus Weimar: 1919–1925,” Bauhaus Kooperation, accessed November 19, 2021, <https://www.bauhauskooperation.com/knowledge/the-bauhaus/phases/bauhaus-weimar/>.

²⁸ “Bauhaus Weimar: 1919–1925.”

modern architecture’, which consisted of various models and drawings by Bauhaus masters for ongoing projects they were working on.²⁹ Inside of the individual workshops, products of the workshops were on display essentially showing what kinds of crafts the school had to offer and some of their most prized outputs. This was likely intended to draw attention to the potential of these progressing artisans: Bauhaus students. There were theoretical studies and presentations on the preliminary course taking place in the classrooms. At the State Museum in Weimar there was an exhibition featuring Bauhaus painting and sculpture in conversation with the display inside the Weimar Bauhaus. These traditional display styles were accompanied by various lectures and performances that will be explored further in Chapter 3. In total it is estimated that approximately fifteen thousand visitors attended the Bauhaus exhibition in Weimar in 1923 meaning that fifteen thousand people were exposed to Gropius’s vision and were able to witness first hand the potential of this institution and its students.

In 1930, three undergraduate students at Harvard organized the first Bauhaus exhibit in the United States—the only American exhibition put on prior to the school’s closure in 1933. These students—Lincoln Kirstein, Edward M.M. Warburg, and John Walker III—had been ‘dissatisfied with the lack of contemporary art [...] at Harvard’s Fogg Museum’ and in response they decided to establish the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art in December 1928.³⁰ This society is credited for prefiguring the Museum of Modern Art which was founded only nine months later in New York City. Art historian and collector, Sybil Gordon Kantor has written that ‘the Harvard Society was always one step ahead of the [MoMA], showing work never before seen in exhibition in America; its size and the nature of the enterprise allowed it to present more

²⁹ Bayer, Gropius, and Gropius, eds., *Bauhaus*, 82.

³⁰ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums,” Harvard Art Museums, accessed November 20, 2021, <https://harvardartmuseums.org/tour/the-bauhaus/slide/6339>.

radical artists': Alexander Calder, Buckminster Fuller, Pablo Picasso, and an array of Bauhaus artists.³¹

The 1930 exhibition at Harvard featured works by 'Herbert Bayer, Lyonel Feininger, Johannes Itten, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, and Lothar Schreyer'—predominantly paintings, drawings, prints, and decorative works by past and present Bauhaus artists.³² It was made possible largely due to funding from John Becker, a New York gallerist, and Philip Johnson, a recent Harvard graduate, both of whom had visited the Bauhaus for the first time a few years prior in 1927 with Harvard graduate students Jere Abbott and Alfred Barr.³³ After Harvard, the 1930 exhibition traveled to Becker's gallery in New York and to the Arts Club in Chicago.³⁴ According to author and architecture professor Margret Kentgens-Craig, its reception at the Arts Club was most dramatic in terms of its effect on public awareness of the Bauhaus.³⁵ It was considered 'one of the most publicly visible "first contacts" of the Bauhaus in the United States'.³⁶

Alfred Barr, a consultant to the Society for Contemporary art, was asked, in 1929, to take on the role of director at the newly founded MoMA, where, consistent with his Bauhaus appreciation and peripheral education, he 'controversially proposed departments not just of painting, sculpture, and prints, but also of graphic design, industrial design, film,' and scenography, keeping in mind the multi-dimensional Bauhaus workshops.³⁷ Barr's proposition proved too unconventional for the board of the MoMA at the time. Instead, he revised his plan as

³¹ Sybil Gordon Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002).

³² "The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums."

³³ "The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums."

³⁴ Margret Kentgens-Craig, *The Bauhaus and America: First Contacts, 1919-1936* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1999), 73.

³⁵ Kentgens-Craig, *The Bauhaus and America*, 73.

³⁶ "The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums."

³⁷ "The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums."

one that would ‘encourage and develop the study of modern art ... and the application of such art to [manufacturing] and [...] practical life’.³⁸ This qualification allowed for the potential of new departments to be added later. And so they were: in 1932 Barr created the museum’s department of architecture calling on his colleague, Philip Johnson, as its director.³⁹ Johnson’s first exhibition, *Modern Architecture* (1932), a collaborative curatorial project with Henry Russell-Hitchcock, another Harvard classmate, though not explicitly focusing on the Bauhaus, ended up featuring a lot of Bauhaus artwork.⁴⁰ With this show, these two curators explored what they found to be ‘a broad-based phenomenon in architecture of the last decade, suggesting a kind of modern canon in which the Bauhaus figured prominently’.⁴¹ In conversation with this show, Johnson and Russell-Hitchcock published *The International Style* (1932) defining the American reception of modernism.⁴²

Following this 1932 exhibit, the MoMA went on to feature exhibitions such as *Machine Art* (1934), *Bauhaus, 1919–1928* (1938), and the *Useful Objects* series (1938–49). Interestingly most of these exhibitions were drafted in the homes of Barr and Johnson following their visits to the Bauhaus and prior to making their way to the MoMA.⁴³ The exhibition catalogue for the 1938 exhibition is still widely used in contemporary study of the Bauhaus especially with regard to its dissemination and its translation to North American design.

Countless exhibitions have taken place since these early significant ones at Harvard and MoMA. In more recent years, the hundred year anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus in 2019 has inspired lots of curators and exhibitions focusing largely on its global influence a

³⁸ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

³⁹ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

⁴⁰ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

⁴¹ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

⁴² “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

⁴³ “Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson,” Grey Art Gallery (New York University, September 16, 2020), <https://greyartgallery.nyu.edu/exhibition/partners-design-alfred-h-barr-jr-philip-johnson/>

century later—shedding light on the continued relevance of the Bauhaus in the contemporary study of modernism. Small and standard scale exhibitions promote Bauhaus ideology in perhaps the most direct way: exposing and making public the outputs of the Bauhausler and portraying the exhibited works as embodiments of the Bauhaus mission.

Chapter 2: Architecture as Exhibition

In examining the ways in which Bauhaus ideology is promoted through exhibition, it is important to consider architecture, physical buildings and spaces, as a form of display that was widely used by the masters. A few early structures play a prominent role in this regard: the Weimar era Haus Am Horn (See fig. 3), the Dessau masters houses (Fig. 4), and the Dessau Bauhaus building (See fig. 1). Each of these structures were prized in the Bauhaus community and were built with function at the forefront. Even presently, they continue to attract visitors much like small and standard scale museum exhibitions.

The Haus am Horn, designed by Bauhaus painter and teacher Georg Muche, was the first building based on Bauhaus design principles. It was constructed for the Bauhaus Werkschau in accordance with the 1923 Weimar exhibition. Though the Haus am Horn was Muche's design, the plans (Fig. 5) were approved by Gropius as Muche was not a trained architect.⁴⁴ The World Heritage Centre, the association responsible for maintaining many Bauhaus buildings, notes that the form of these early structures hinged on their loyalty to function and their ability to fulfill spatial needs.⁴⁵ In an abstract process that focused on establishing goals and constructing relationships between necessary spaces, an architectural program made up of 'subdivided building structure and [...] individual structural elements' would arise.⁴⁶ Such elements were reduced to their basic forms, generally cubes or rectangular prisms, deriving expression from

⁴⁴ Jeremy Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon: 1923-2019," From De Stijl to Dutch Design: Canonising Design 2.0 (Creative industries fund NL, December 7, 2016), <https://cris.brighton.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/480080/special+issue+jeremy+aynsley.pdf>, 28.

⁴⁵ "Bauhaus and Its Sites in Weimar, Dessau and Bernau," UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed November 22, 2021, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/729>.

⁴⁶ "Bauhaus and Its Sites in Weimar, Dessau and Bernau."

interconnecting cubic spaces—a hallmark of modernism—that suggest a kind of spatial transparency.⁴⁷

It is important to recall that the Haus am Horn was originally built as a component of the 1923 exhibition to prove to local authorities that the growing Bauhaus was deserving of continued financial support from the city government. The period in which this house was built also coincided with Walter Gropius's re-orientation of the Bauhaus's mission focusing more heavily on programmatic design.⁴⁸ The Haus am Horn was built for a married couple with one child and a daily housekeeper.⁴⁹ It was intended to be the first of many homes of this style in Weimar, however subsequent structures were never realized as the school and the local government faced financial limitations and push back from neighbouring residences who found this new building style to be alien. Perhaps, considering this reception, the Haus am Horn was somewhat ahead of its time—early out-of-the-box ideas tend to be. In time, this strategic vision—minimal approach to interior design, and thoughtful division of the floor plan according to function (leaving spaces feeling open)—would become increasingly desirable. As the World Heritage Centre notes, part of this rejection of aesthetic building tradition came in the form of material choice—reinforced concrete, glass, steel—and building methods—skeleton construction, glass facades.⁵⁰ The transparency that seems to be a feature of all contemporary architecture got its start, arguably, in the Haus am Horn.

Planned as a 'ribbon of rooms around a central room' (See fig. 5), the Haus am Horn featured many loosely enforced and intersecting paths with the most prominent 'leading from the hall to a guest room, the man's bedroom, bathroom, lady's room, child's bedroom and playroom,

⁴⁷ "Bauhaus and Its Sites in Weimar, Dessau and Bernau."

⁴⁸ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 27–28.

⁴⁹ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 27–28.

⁵⁰ "Bauhaus and Its Sites in Weimar, Dessau and Bernau."

dining room, and kitchen with walk-in cupboards'.⁵¹ The most central area has a higher ceiling than the peripheral spaces. It functioned as a central reception, a living room, a study, and an exhibition space.⁵² As architectural historian Luke Fiederer writes, 'each space was designed with an explicit program in mind, and intentionally specialized so that it could not be used for any other purpose'.⁵³ This was not so much to limit the use of the space but rather to focus on the distinctions between public and private and eliminate confusion with respect to spatial experiences—the Bauhausler believed there was a benefit to spatial allocation. Mucbe was deliberate in his incorporation of amenities necessary for modern everyday living: the child's room (See fig. 3.3) features wooden units in classic Bauhaus colours—the primary scheme—which encourage a kind of 'constructive play'.⁵⁴ This inclusion allotted a functional approach to childhood leisure. Mucbe also paid much attention to new and thoughtful technologies for the home—specifically lighting fixtures.⁵⁵ Countless precedents set in the design of the Haus am Horn would inform decision making in the construction of the Bauhaus Dessau and the Dessau Meisterhäuser, or masters' houses.

For an institution widely known for its architectural legacy, it is surprising that the Bauhaus did not have a true department of architecture until 1927. Initially, architectural plans were drafted independently. This was the case with the Bauhaus Dessau (See fig. 1), the iconic building drafted privately by Walter Gropius and built in 1925–1926. Much like the Haus am Horn, this large construction makes use of concrete, glass, and metal framework. It was planned with functional division at the forefront of the program with each wing of the building fulfilling different and specific needs. A historically risky construction but a visually interesting decision,

⁵¹ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

⁵² Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

⁵³ Luke Fiederer, "Ad Classics: Haus Am Horn / Georg Mucbe," ArchDaily (ArchDaily, June 12, 2017), <https://www.archdaily.com/873082/ad-classics-haus-am-horn-germany-georg-mucbe>.

⁵⁴ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

⁵⁵ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

Gropius juxtaposed a glass facade with load bearing framework that allowed for a view of the interior workings of the school.⁵⁶ This decision also offered a view of the constructive elements of the building reinforcing it as an architectural masterpiece capable of making beams and metal work, typical architectural elements, full of wonder and beauty. This design strategy made the building seem simultaneously intimidating and inviting—intimidating in terms of the genius contained within and inviting in terms of the visual accessibility it offered. In fact, a road—Bauhausstraße—even ran, and continues to run in between the two asymmetrical sides of the Dessau Bauhaus and underneath the elevated walkway connecting them (See fig. 1.4). In providing a pathway for citizens of Dessau in the form of a public road, the school is constantly on display and is forced to remain immersed in the local culture and infrastructure of Dessau.

Gropius intentionally designed and oriented the various wings of the Dessau Bauhaus asymmetrically, requiring that the form of the complex ‘be grasped only by moving around the building’.⁵⁷ There is no single way to approach or view the building. There is no explicit front. The same is true for the Haus am Horn (See fig. 3) with its orientation to the road, the driveway, and the surrounding homes. I wonder if this is because Gropius and Bauhaus designers intended for their buildings to be completely embraced and understood. A building is two dimensional when it is only viewed in a singular section. This kind of understanding only exists on paper and built structures are so much more than their plans. He wanted to convey not only the multidimensionality of the physical building, but also its inner workings, its workshops, and the creative minds and thought processes of its affiliates. From the exterior, it is on display to viewers from every angle, even its center, without obstruction. Inside, the elements on display shift. The experience becomes less of a physical evaluation of aesthetic craft in terms of

⁵⁶ “Bauhaus Building by Walter Gropius (1925–26),” Bauhaus Dessau, accessed November 22, 2021, <https://www.bauhaus-dessau.de/en/architecture/bauhaus-building.html>.

⁵⁷ “Bauhaus Building by Walter Gropius (1925–26).”

architectural construction, though that is still at the forefront, and more an observation of interior spatial division, the innovative Bauhaus workshops, and an opportunity to observe the Bauhaus mission in motion.

Part of the Bauhaus's ability to exhibit architecturally was made possible through standard exhibitions like the one in 1923. The Bauhaus, and specifically the Dessau school, also hosted lots of individual artists, architects, and curators as a means of exposing these creative thinkers, people admired by students and masters alike, to a Bauhaus way of life. Alfred Barr, Philip Johnson, and Jere Abbott's visit in 1927 was monumental. Not only did it establish a connection between the institution and the United States, it also inspired a variety of US based Bauhaus exhibits, as noted in Chapter 1, and an understanding of the ties between the fine arts, craftwork, and production design that proved essential for their 'synthetic program of art, design, and architecture' at the MoMA.⁵⁸ It is important, also, to note that this relationship was reciprocal. The visitors gained inspiration from the Bauhaus students and masters and in return the students and masters gained publicity and an opportunity for their creations to be on display in front of an international audience. This sense of reciprocity, specifically in the case of the MoMA visitors, and global connection will come into play again in Chapter 5—with the rise of national socialism in Germany, and the close of the Bauhaus in 1933, these kinds of foreign connections offered a safe haven, and a variety of creative opportunities for Bauhaus émigré.

One additional example of architecture as exhibition comes in the form of the Dessau Meisterhäuser (See fig. 4). This construction was a functional excuse to establish footing in Dessau and incorporate additional Bauhaus architecture into the new landscape. Only a few blocks from Bauhausstraße, the Meisterhäuser were removed but still in conversation with the architecture of the new school—much like two paintings in adjacent rooms in a museum: part of

⁵⁸ "The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums."

the same curatorial strategy but each contributing something different. Walter Gropius's Meisterhäuser, built in 1926, were four houses—three double homes and one single home—built for the Bauhaus masters that traveled with Gropius from Weimar to Dessau.⁵⁹ The single home was intended for Gropius and his wife Ise while the other three double homes were intended for teachers László Moholy-Nagy and Lyonel Feininger; Georg Muche and Oskar Schlemmer; and Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee and their families.⁶⁰ In his essay 'Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon: 1923–2019', Brighton Professor of Design history, Jeremy Aynsley argues that 'in contrast to the Haus am Horn, the context for the Bauhaus master houses is other contemporary modernist buildings in the district', suggesting that Dessau, as opposed to Weimar, was a more suitable setting for the innovative Bauhaus.⁶¹ Aynsley subsequently claims that the Meisterhäuser were 'seen as the fulfillment of the ideal visionary complex' in which Gropius, as opposed to Muche, got to express this architectural realization and present it to the world on his own terms—keeping in mind that despite its positive reception, Gropius did not feel prepared for the 1923 exhibition.⁶²

During their construction, the Meisterhäuser were filmed and 'became acclaimed through their extensive publication'—another notable Bauhaus display strategy to be explored further in Chapter 4.⁶³ Even without publication or an accompanying description, these structures—though they require a visit—largely speak for themselves. They convey a sense of innovation and transparency as well as groundedness, durability, and approachability. Using these structures as an additional example, I find the aforementioned notion regarding Bauhaus structures as simultaneously inviting and intimidating to be microcosmic of Bauhaus architecture as a whole.

⁵⁹ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

⁶⁰ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 28.

⁶¹ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 30.

⁶² Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 30.

⁶³ Aynsley, "Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon," 30.

Bauhaus architecture allows itself to be seen. It makes itself accessible. It devotes itself to spatial problem solving and simplification. It wants to be appreciated and is not explicitly exclusive. At the same time it is unknown and other. It is exciting and thought provoking. The viewer or inhabitant gets the sense that any given Bauhaus structure is bound for greatness. There is a sense of unattainable worth imposed on these constructions—perhaps this has developed over time as the Bauhaus has gained a respected reputation—that is apparent through their existence and their display. Through Bauhaus architecture's accessibility, its strategic use of Bauhaus aesthetic traditions, and its devotion to function, spatial problem solving, innovation, and repeated invitation, Bauhaus architecture acts in exhibition in its promotion of Bauhaus ideology.

Chapter 3: Performance and Gathering

Throughout the past two chapters, it has become clear that in an effort to gain attention and spread its mission, the Bauhaus has made itself accessible, offering public display and opportunities to engage with artworks and structures. Being the multimedia institution that it was, the Bauhaus also connected with its various communities—the internal Bauhaus community and the global scale—through performance and gathering. When I say ‘performance’ I am referring not only to theatrical productions and dance, but also to immersive exhibits that rely on community engagement and create art forms out of entertainment, spontaneity, and pleasure.

In her article, ‘How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!’, author and artist Smirna Kulenović notes that despite being known as an architecture and design academy, ‘the Bauhaus school was actually the first official artistic institution containing performance as a necessary part of education’.⁶⁴ This might come as no surprise given the unconventional teaching methods explored in the introduction—ice skating on paper, for example.⁶⁵ The theater workshop was implemented to ‘cure students from Expressionism’; it was headed by Oskar Schlemmer, a painter, sculptor, and avant-garde artist ‘interested in translating the visual language to the language of performance art’.⁶⁶ Schlemmer’s well known *Triadic Ballet* (Fig. 6) is a successful achievement of this goal. This piece was the ultimate fusion and display of the ‘balance between [...] abstract concepts and emotional impulses’.⁶⁷ The ballet featured three dancers and ‘three parts of the symphonic architectonic composition’ along with triple fusion of dance with costumes and music.⁶⁸ Schlemmer’s compositional process led with

⁶⁴ Smirna Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!,” *Widewalls*, March 26, 2017, <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/bauhaus-school-performance-art>.

⁶⁵ Bauhaus Archiv, *Original Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

⁶⁶ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁶⁷ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁶⁸ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

the visual (See fig. 6). He used his painting and sculptural background in the development of form—playing with scale and balance, and distorting the human body to the point where the figures appear almost doll-like. Next, Schlemmer would find the right music to suit the costumes, and finally he would construct movements which were guided by the music and the costume choices.⁶⁹ Kulenović notes that the dance evolved progressively from ‘everyday life actions like standing and walking, to more complex geometric gestures’: they explored connections between reality and the fantastic, ‘the artificial and the human’.⁷⁰ This was most obviously conveyed through the use of puppets whose gestures would mimic human movements.

While this performance was certainly beautiful, the intention behind it was more than an aesthetic display. It was a comment on, and an attempt to influence space in the early twentieth century. Kulenović argues that one point of controversy within spatial analysis during the Bauhaus experiments of the 1920s ‘was the opposition between the visual plane and spatial depth’.⁷¹ Oskar Schlemmer’s 1932 painting *Bauhaus Stairway* (Fig. 7) speaks to this issue in both its attention to, and its lack of accurate perspective. It is simultaneously flat in its abstraction and intersecting planes and three dimensional in its use of shadow and hierarchy of scale. Schlemmer seemed to understand space as something that could not be fully expressed in two dimensions. Through performance art, he was the first Bauhausler able to make sense of spatial expression. He described space as ‘a unifying element in architecture’ and made an attempt to demonstrate this finding to others in his performative compositions. They provided an example of the rich outcome one might receive when combining multiple, typically individual, art forms—painting, costume and textile design, and dance—and the power of such a juxtaposition. Kulenović argues that each of Schlemmer’s experimental dance performances had

⁶⁹ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷⁰ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷¹ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

‘common denominators’: a ‘feeling of space volume and the sensation of space’.⁷² I would argue that this same common denominator exists in an attempt to understand what unites the various Bauhaus workshops, and what unites the forms experienced by people on a daily basis.

These kinds of performances, as Kulenović notes, were often triggered by the Bauhaus’s frequent costume parties and well known festivals.⁷³ She claims that there were three elements holding the Bauhaus community together: Walter Gropius’s Bauhaus manifesto, lectures and workshops, and social events that were crucial spaces for ‘free experimentation and improvisation’.⁷⁴ The Bauhaus hosted various costume festivals including *the Beard, Nose and Heart Festival*, *the White Festival*, and the famous *Metalic Festival*.⁷⁵ Oskar Schlemmer went so far as to claim that these parties served as the foundation for many of the productions in the theater workshop.⁷⁶ The Bauhaus also hosted its famous lantern festivals (Fig. 8) and kite festivals which focused less on costumes and theater and more on manufacturing. To the public, these events portrayed the Bauhaus as an awe inspiring place that was full of innovation, spirit, collaboration, and spontaneity. They provided a window into the future of production, design, and the art community—leaving people feeling curious and excited.

A production of Schlemmer’s *Triadic Ballet* was put on during ‘Bauhaus Week’ as a part of the 1923 exhibition in Weimar. There was a paper lantern festival, fireworks (naturally a multi-sensory experience), a dance with accompaniment by a Bauhaus Jazz Band, and a series of ‘reflected light compositions’ (Fig. 9) popularized by Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack.⁷⁷ The Bauhaus also engaged with its community through a series of open lectures: Walter Gropius’s ‘Art and Technics, a New Unity’, Wassily Kandinsky’s ‘On Synthetic Art’, and J. J. P. Oud’s ‘New

⁷² Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷³ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷⁴ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷⁵ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷⁶ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

⁷⁷ Kulenović, “How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!”

Building in Holland'.⁷⁸ The Bauhaus masters were generous in this regard and would often give visiting lectures at other institutions while the Bauhaus was in session and after, promoting their theories and referencing the Bauhaus mission in the process.

The Bauhaus used performance art and public gathering to promote its ideology through engagement. In the case of these living artworks: theater, dance, costume design, and leisure or entertainment based crafts (paper kite and lantern making); accessibility and the ability to experience and become immersed is critical. The Bauhaus tendency to open doors and share was pivotal in giving local and international communities a glimpse into the spirit, and the mindset of the school. Performance and gathering put the Bauhaus on display in an effective demonstration of its deviation from a traditional and technical fine arts education toward an experimental design and craft centered one.

⁷⁸ Kulenović, "How the Bauhaus School Gave Life to... Performance Art Movement!"

Chapter 4: Publication as a Means of Display

The Bauhaus was also able to influence the way it was received through publication—a kind of exhibitionary strategy. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Bauhaus Meisterhäuser were filmed during their various stages of construction and gained an admired reputation in the process due to their ‘extensive publication’.⁷⁹ This form of documentation was spearheaded by Bauhaus photographer Lucia Moholy, wife of László Moholy-Nagy.⁸⁰ Moholy’s photography practice came in handy in a variety of Bauhaus publications and promotional materials. She strategically documented Bauhaus spaces and works aiming for certain visual effects. In the case of the Meisterhäuser (See fig. 4.4), Moholy presented the houses in a style consistent with ‘modernist rhetoric’—‘strong contrasts, heavy shadows, and experimental points of view’ reminiscent, in form, of a plan or section drawing.⁸¹ If Moholy’s goal was to depict the Bauhaus Meisterhäuser as wonderful, clean, abstract living spaces—almost too artistic and beautiful to be inhabitable—she certainly achieved it. The Bauhausler viewed publication as a strategy to paint the school in its most flattering light, making its mission known, and not simply reporting its accomplishments by presenting successes in conversation with ordinary images. Moholy could have simply printed her images the way they naturally existed on the negative. Instead, through her use of heightened contrast, shadow, and perspective, the presence of the typical Bauhaus fusion of cubic forms becomes a bit more visually obvious (See fig. 4.4)—thereby subtly and aesthetically hinting at the institution’s mission and connection to the abstract as a means of understanding the built environment.

⁷⁹ Aynsley, “Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon,” 30.

⁸⁰ Aynsley, “Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon,” 30.

⁸¹ Aynsley, “Bauhaus Houses and the Design Canon,” 30.

The fourteen Bauhaus journals, an iconic series of prized Bauhaus literature, were published between the years of 1926 and 1931. Edited by Walter Gropius and designed by László Moholy-Nagy, these journals included works and articles by Bauhaus masters and ‘avant-garde contemporaries like Piet Mondrian, Kasimir Malevich, and Van Doesburg’.⁸² Making use of a sleek and linear layout, these journals addressed Bauhaus developments and innovations within the peripheral Bauhaus community: ‘the methods and focal points of their own teaching, and current projects of students and masters’.⁸³ During the time of publication, the journals were ‘primarily addressed to the members of the “circle of friends of the bauhaus”’.⁸⁴ Lars Müller, compiler of the 2019 *Bauhaus Journal 1926–1931* facsimile, comments that the original journal ‘makes tangible the authentic voice of this mouthpiece of the avant-garde’ and that his contemporary edition—featuring all of the original materials, an English translation of German texts, a commentary booklet, and a scholarly essay contextualizing the journal—intends to cast a new light on the international discourse, and research on the Bauhaus, its theories, and its designs.⁸⁵ He points out the historical and modern significance of these texts and how the various publications provide an excellent resource for contemporary Bauhaus study.

I tend to understand these journals as a kind of exhibition catalogue without the accompaniment of a physical exhibition. In some ways, they seem to serve the same purpose as the 1923 exhibition in terms of reporting on Bauhaus progress, goals, and methodology—keeping the community posted. Being able to have full control over internal literary representation, just like the case with Moholy’s image set, was extremely significant with respect to the reception of a Bauhaus identity, both historically and today.

⁸² “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums,” Harvard Art Museums, accessed November 26, 2021, <https://harvardartmuseums.org/tour/the-bauhaus/slide/6338>.

⁸³ Walter Gropius and László Moholy-Nagy, eds., *Bauhaus Journal 1926-1931* (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2019).

⁸⁴ Gropius, and Moholy-Nagy, eds., *Bauhaus Journal 1926-1931*.

⁸⁵ Gropius, and Moholy-Nagy, eds., *Bauhaus Journal 1926-1931*.

As noted in Chapter 1, *The International Style*, published in 1932 by Philip Johnson and Henry Russell-Hitchcock also contributed, this time through an American lens, to the literary Bauhaus discourse. The Harvard Museum, the origin point of both Johnson and Russell-Hitchcock, suggests that the formalist emphasis on a new innovative international style ‘typified the American reception of modernism’ by categorizing it as approachable and un-intimidating while still being forward thinking.⁸⁶ The text glosses ‘over the radically progressive politics threatening the European avant-garde at the time’, allowing American perception of this new international style to be predominantly based on aesthetics as opposed to political prejudice or biases.⁸⁷

Publication, as a means of display, contributes to the promotion of Bauhaus ideology largely through its contemporary use and its ability to reach audiences who might otherwise be unable to engage with Bauhaus works in person. Literature and documentation allowed Bauhaus artists to represent themselves and their creations on their own terms meaning that the messages received by audiences—Bauhaus ideology—were intentional, effective, and direct.

⁸⁶ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

⁸⁷ “The Bauhaus: Harvard Art Museums.”

Chapter 5: Global Dissemination

The closing of the Bauhaus in 1933 left many wondering what would happen next. What would become of the masters and the students? From where would the next great institution emerge? How would the Bauhaus tradition transform in time? The answers proved to be quite multifaceted. Many Bauhausler used their institutional connections to flee Germany and begin new projects. In 1934, Walter Gropius left Germany for England with his wife. He was followed by Marcel Breuer and László Moholy-Nagy.⁸⁸ Jack Pritchard, founder of the Isokon Furniture Company Ltd., was an admirer of modernist design and architecture, and was responsible for facilitating this move.⁸⁹ During a business trip in 1931, Pritchard visited the Dessau Bauhaus and developed a deep fascination with the methodology of the school and their modernist ideas; his ‘antifascist impetus’ was critical in the aid he provided the émigré masters throughout their settlement in London.⁹⁰

Thanks to Pritchard’s connections in the UK, the émigré masters had no difficulty finding commissioned jobs.⁹¹ In 1935, Gropius became Controller of Design for Pritchard’s Isokon Furniture Company Ltd. incorporating Bauhaus elements into his contributions and advising Pritchard on furniture designs that ‘followed the Bauhaus ethos’.⁹² While in England, Gropius was hired to collaborate with architect Maxwell Fry in the design of the Impington Village School (1935) in Cambridgeshire. Gropius did not contribute to the curriculum. He felt that a Bauhaus programme was not suitable for the UK ‘because of the conditions and reception of modernism’ at the time—he found their design approach to be incomparable to that of

⁸⁸ Mariana Meneses, “The Bauhaus Journey in Britain,” *bauhaus imaginista*, accessed November 30, 2021, <http://www.bauhaus-imaginista.org/articles/4262/the-bauhaus-journey-in-britain>.

⁸⁹ Meneses, “The Bauhaus Journey in Britain.”

⁹⁰ Meneses, “The Bauhaus Journey in Britain.”

⁹¹ Meneses, “The Bauhaus Journey in Britain.”

⁹² Meneses, “The Bauhaus Journey in Britain.”

Germany.⁹³ This was not the case in the United States. In 1937, László Maholy-Nagy and Walter Gropius left England for the US where they founded the New Bauhaus in Chicago and drew extensively from Bauhaus teachings.⁹⁴ In 1949, the New Bauhaus merged with the Illinois Institute of Technology where Mies Van Der Rohe had become the director.⁹⁵ Gropius left the New Bauhaus to head Harvard's Graduate School of Design in Cambridge, MA where he remained until his death in 1969.

In an additional effort to provide refuge and opportunity to Bauhaus émigré, Philip Johnson, who was regarded as 'the most influential trailblazer for the Bauhaus in America',⁹⁶ and who served as director of the MoMA's department of architecture, recommended Bauhaus craft master and painter, Josef Albers and his wife, a textile artist and weaver, Anni Albers as instructors to Black Mountain College in North Carolina.⁹⁷ Their US presence was pivotal in the development of the fiber arts movement of the 1960s—many fiber artists were trained under Bauhaus teachers: Lenore Tawney by Marli Ehrman, Sheila Hicks by Josef Albers and Anne Wilson by Lena Bergner and Hannes Meyer, the second Bauhaus director.⁹⁸

There are countless examples of Bauhausler emigration to South America as well, significantly in the urban development of Buenos Aires. Bauhausler, Grete Stern's married Argentinian born Bauhaus photography student, Horacio Coppola—together they settled in Buenos Aires.⁹⁹ It was there that they became established artists and contributed greatly to Argentinian modernist discourse through the commission of a residence by Wladimiro

⁹³ Meneses, "The Bauhaus Journey in Britain."gropius's'

⁹⁴ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus: bern feiert seine meister*, Bern: Zentrum Paul Klee, 2019, Exhibition catalog.

⁹⁵ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

⁹⁶ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Karlsruhe: Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, 2019, Exhibition catalog.

⁹⁷ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

⁹⁸ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

⁹⁹ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

Acosta—a site, and architectural display, that became a ‘meeting place’ for modernists of Buenos Aires in the 1940s.¹⁰⁰ According to the Bauhaus centennial exhibition at the Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe, Stern and Coppola ‘influenced an entire generation of Argentinian artists’ through their ‘commitment to the reception and dissemination of Bauhaus aesthetics in the fields of photography, graphic design and the fine arts’.¹⁰¹ Given the Bauhausler’s tendency to exhibit it would be unsurprising to learn that Stern and Coppola shared their Bauhaus background through visual means guided by display. Likewise, the Mexican revolution provoked a rise of new leaders from ‘various revolutionary movements’ and ‘the creation of new state structures’.¹⁰² It was during this time that Juan Lagarreta and Juan O’Gorman, two Mexican architects, were inspired by Bauhaus publications, Le Corbusier’s writings, and other European modernist literature and began to implement elements of functionalist and rationalist architecture into their work.¹⁰³ In turn, Lagarreta and O’Gorman are now considered the most influential designers in introducing functionalism, a cornerstone of Bauhaus ideology, to Mexico.¹⁰⁴

From an educational standpoint, the Bauhaus did have global contemporaries, many of which emerged around a similar time as well as in the wake of the Bauhaus. These institutions—the VKhUTEMAS in Moscow, Russia, the Kala Bhavana in Shantiniketan, India, and Seikatsu Kōsei Kenkyusho in Tokyo, Japan—aligned with Gropius’s thought that there should be ‘no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman’.¹⁰⁵ These early design institutions were constantly in conversation with one another through visiting exhibitions of student work, overlapping faculty members, and collaborative instruction.¹⁰⁶ Similar art schools

¹⁰⁰ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰¹ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰² ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰³ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰⁴ ZKM Karlsruhe, *The Whole World a Bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰⁵ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

¹⁰⁶ Bauhaus Imaginista, *100 jahre bauhaus*, Exhibition catalog.

sprouted in the wake of the closed Bauhaus incorporating Bauhaus methods at every turn and drawing heavily on Itten's preliminary course.

While the global dissemination of the Bauhaus is less of an exhibitionary tactic, the relationships that made the international transmission of Bauhaus ideals possible were formed through means of display. In the case of Juan Lagarreta and Juan O'Gorman, modernist publications functioned as a kind of virtual exhibition when physical exhibition and display of Bauhaus art works had not yet ventured into Mexico. With regard to Philip Johnson and Jack Pritchard, Bauhaus architecture was on display during each of their individual visits to the Bauhaus Dessau. These brief Bauhaus immersions were so awe inspiring that both Johnson and Pritchard believed the school to be worthy of tremendous endorsement and hospitality in their home countries.

The majority of the sources informing this chapter come from two centennial Bauhaus exhibitions: *The Whole World a Bauhaus* at the ZKM Karlsruhe, and *The Bauhaus Imaginista* at the ZPK Bern (the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin is referenced in the introduction and Chapter 4). This goes to show that contemporary discourse about the global dissemination of Bauhaus ideology is continually evolving. The missions upon which it was founded, even one hundred years later, are still completely relevant. Architects and designers from all over the world continue to construct to meet societal needs. They allow function to dictate form and emphasize craft over the fine arts. And most of all they strive to unite the arts in an effort to solve design related problems in aesthetically interesting ways. This contemporary approach to architecture and design on an international scale, as translated through Bauhaus ideology, was made possible through the evolution of Bauhaus exhibition.

Conclusion

Since the Bauhaus's founding in 1919, its exhibits have taken a variety of forms. They have occupied traditional museum display spaces featuring works by students and masters. Exhibits have made use of architecture as the artwork on display, and they have displayed Bauhaus ideology and approaches to space and movement through performative art, presentation, and community engagement. Bauhaus exhibits have existed in the form of literature and photographs in a magazine. And since the Bauhaus's dissemination, relationships forged by these various exhibition styles have made way for the physical spread of Bauhaus methods on a global scale.

In understanding the various Bauhaus display strategies, a few notions come to mind: emphasis on thoughtful exposure, inclusion and accessibility, and consistency in aesthetic display. I believe that, together, these elements made Bauhaus exhibits successful in promoting functionalism, craft, considerate spatial planning and design, and uniting the arts for the benefit of society. Primarily, exposure was critical—without it, the Bauhaus as it is recognized today would be unheard of. The masters were very focused on the institution's representation, making sure that when they were on display—whether that be in the case of the 1923 exhibition in Weimar or Moholy's photography publication of the Meisterhäuser—it was on their own terms, as much as it could be. They would make every effort to put their best foot forward and deliver their intentions clearly featuring appropriate student and master work to convey the well roundedness of the workshops, the need for a fundamental preliminary course, and the potential for Bauhaus outputs to positively tend to the needs of society in a streamlined way.

Inclusion and accessibility might not be the first terms that surface when considering the Bauhaus given its competitive admission rate, and its global reputation for nurturing some of the most proactive artists of the twentieth century. Even still, from a display standpoint, the Bauhaus was constantly opening its doors to the public—providing public lectures, public showings of Bauhaus theater, and engaging with the community through parties and festivals. The Bauhausers knew their worth yet they didn't view themselves as greater than. This modesty and comradery is likely the reason that so many of them were aided by international partners during the rise of National Socialism. As mentioned in Chapter 2, accessibility was at the forefront of the architectural plan of the Bauhaus Dessau. It's use of large scale glass windows provided a sense of transparency and reciprocity with the community. The fact that Bauhausstraße ran, and continues to run between the two wings of the building suggests inclusivity—providing a pathway for the community, and offering an opportunity for them to engage with the institution. Because of its orientation on site, the Bauhaus Dessau was constantly on display, willing it to remain immersed in the culture of Dessau and in conversation with surrounding architectural works.

Finally, Bauhaus exhibits were successful in conveying and promoting Bauhaus ideology through recognizability of form. Organizers, curators, editors, and artists were extremely consistent in the aesthetics of every component of their exhibits. Their loyalty to modernist design schemes created an association among viewers between different Bauhaus outputs—the ability to draw connections between the form of a piece of furniture (Fig. 10) and a metallic utensil (Fig. 11), between a geometric textile pattern (Fig. 12) and a cubic window scheme (See fig. 1.2 and 1.6). This consistency was as subtle as colour palettes and repeated graphic design strategies like font choice in exhibition announcements, festival posters, publications, and the

word 'BAUHAUS' on the exterior of the Dessau school (See fig. 1.3). From the start, Bauhaus pioneers had a strong consolidated voice and aesthetic taste—without regard for ornamentation or decoration—that only became more unified and easily identifiable with time and increased production.

After 102 years, the Bauhaus, whose emphasis on craft, functionalism, spatial and programmatic thoughtfulness, and the unification of the arts, maintains a tremendous contemporary relevance in art education, design, and architecture. This relevance is due to the global reception of the Bauhaus identity and mission as they are expressed through various forms of exhibition: small and standard scale gallery style shows, architecture, performance and engagement, and publication. These systems of display are essential in the historical and contemporary transmission of Bauhaus ideology.

Figures

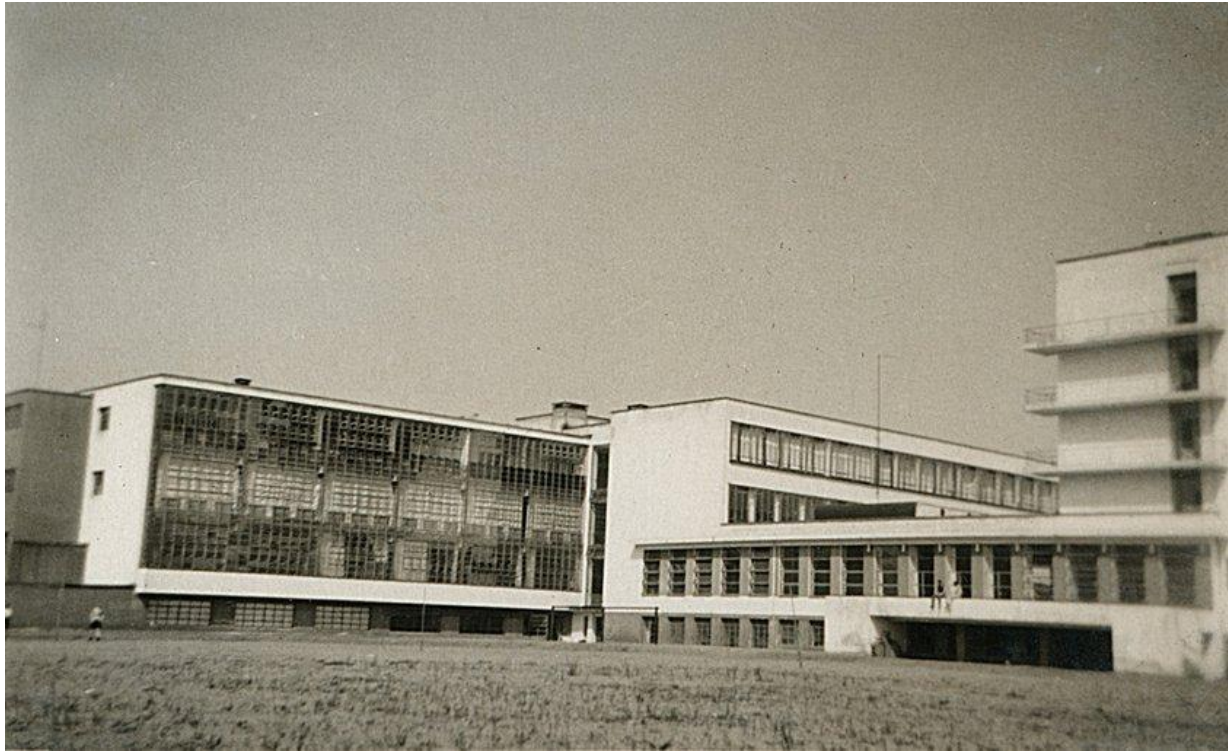


Figure 1

Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus Dessau*, 1925–1926, Dessau, DE., *Bauhaus Dessau*.

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, & 1.4. Exterior; 1.5, 1.6, & 1.7. Interior.



Figure 1 (Continued)

Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus Dessau*, 1925–1926, Dessau, DE., *Bauhaus Dessau*.

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, & 1.4. Exterior; 1.5, 1.6, & 1.7. Interior.



Figure 2

Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Carl Jakob Jucker, *Table Lamp*, 1923–1924, Bauhaus Metal Workshop led by László Moholy-Nagy, *MoMA*.



Figure 3

Georg Muche, *Haus Am Horn*, 1923, Weimar, DE., *ArchDaily*.

3.1 Exterior, 3.2 Kitchen, 3.3 Children's Playroom, 3.4 Living Room, *Sock Studio*.



Figure 3 (Continued)

Georg Muche, *Haus Am Horn*, 1923, Weimar, DE., *ArchDaily*.

3.1 Exterior, 3.2 Kitchen, 3.3 Children's Playroom, **3.4 Living Room, Sock Studio.**



Figure 4

Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus Meisterhäuser*, 1925–1926, Dessau, DE., *Bauhaus Dessau*.
4.1 & 4.2 Exterior; **4.3 Interior**; 4.4 Exterior by Lucia Moholy, *bauhaus Kooperation*.



Figure 4 (Continued)

Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus Meisterhäuser*, 1925–1926, Dessau, DE., *Bauhaus Dessau*.
4.1 & 4.2 Exterior; 4.3 Interior; **4.4 Exterior by Lucia Moholy, *bauhaus kooperation***.

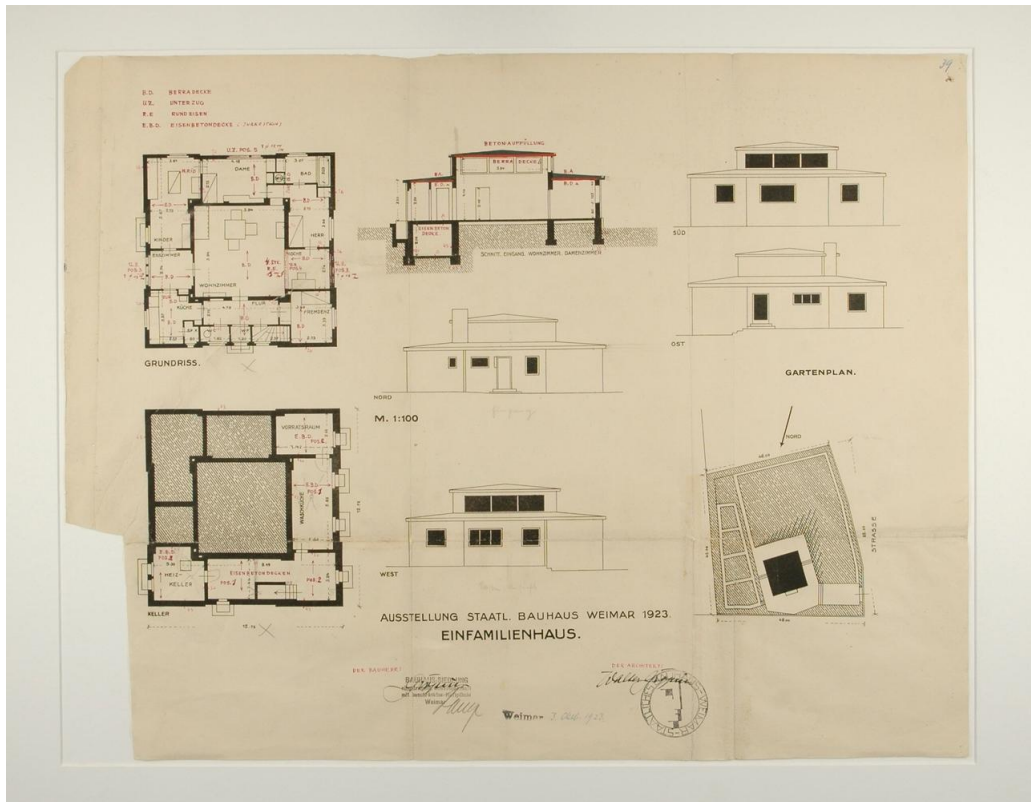
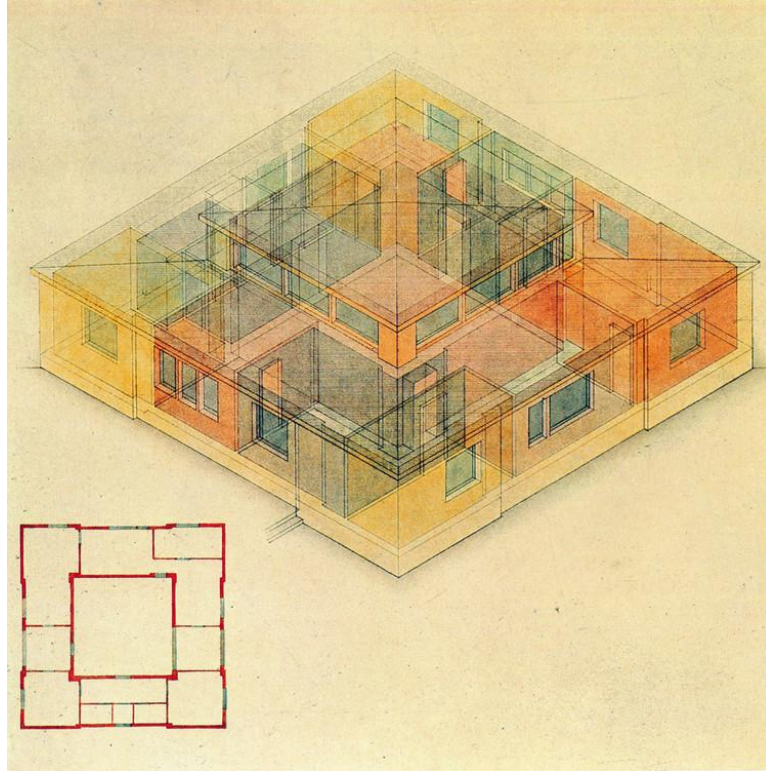


Figure 5
 Georg Muehe, *Haus Am Horn*, 1923, Weimar, DE., *ArchDaily*.
 5.1 Axonometric Drawing, 5.2 Plan.



Figure 6

Oskar Schlemmer, *Triadic Ballet*, c.1922–1932, *Widewalls*.

6.1 Photograph of Performers, Karl Grill; 6.2 Oskar Schlemmer *Stäbetanz/Coureur des échasses*, 1927.



Figure 7

Oskar Schlemmer, *Bauhaus Stairway*, 1932, Bauhaus Dessau, DE., *MoMA*.



Figure 8

Paul Klee, *Festival of the Lanterns*, Bauhaus, 1922, Bauhaus Weimar, DE., *Art Institute of Chicago*.



Figure 9

Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack, *Reflected Light Composition*, 1923, Bauhaus Weimar, DE., *Christie's*.



Figure 10

Marcel Breuer, *Club Chair (model B3)*, 1927–1928, Bauhaus Dessau, DE., *MoMA*.



Figure 11

Marianne Brandt, *Tea Infuser*, 1924, Bauhaus Weimar, DE., *Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin*.

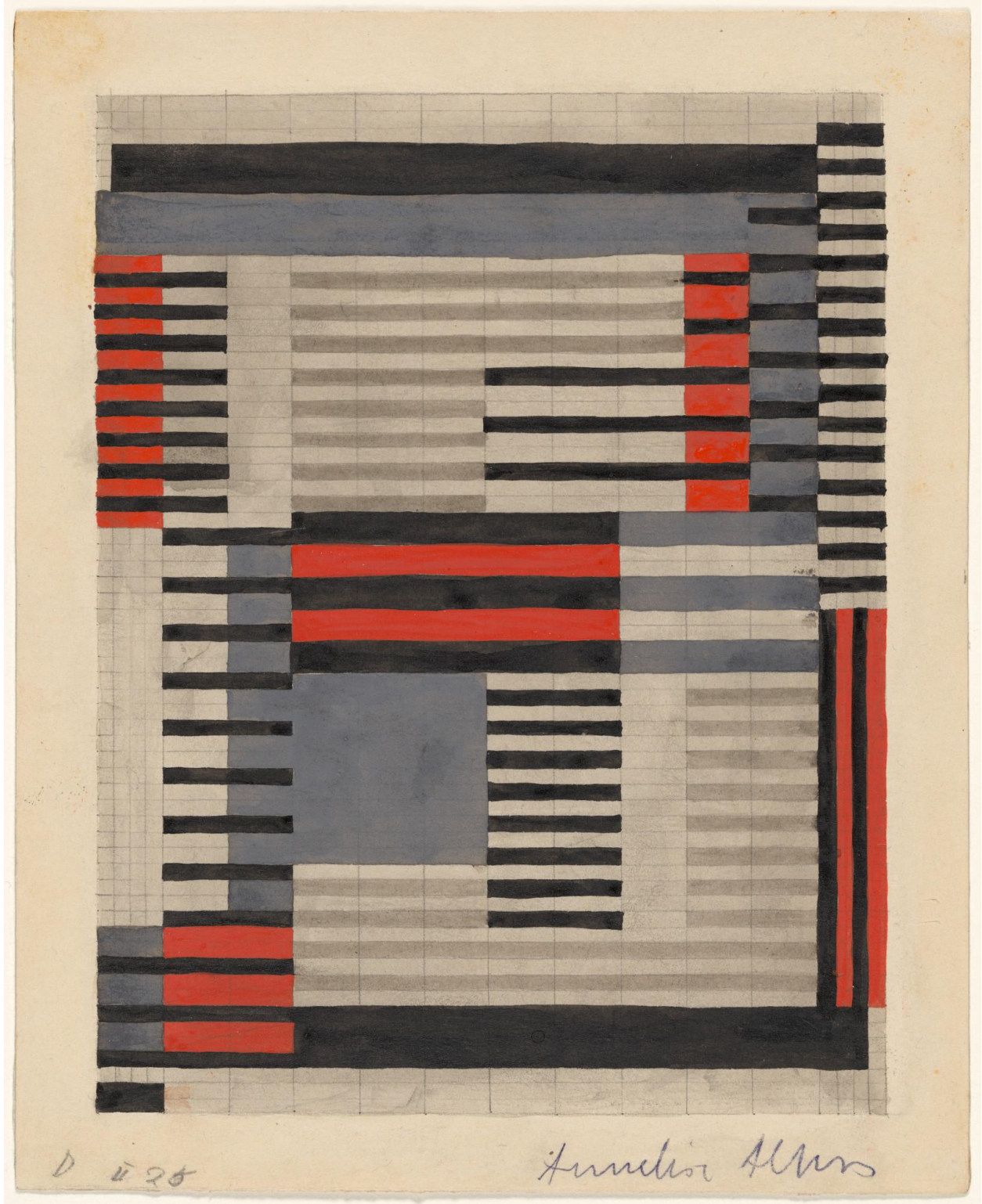


Figure 12

Anni Albers, *Design for Smirna Rug*, 1925, Bauhaus, DE., MoMA.

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