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The Bauhaus Wall Painting Workshop: Mural Painting to Wallpapering, Art to Product

Morgan Ridler

Graduate Center, City University of New York

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THE BAUHAUS WALL PAINTING WORKSHOP: MURAL PAINTING TO
WALLPAPERING, ART TO PRODUCT

by

MORGAN RIDLER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2016



2016

MORGAN RIDLER

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History to satisfy the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Professor Rose-Carol Washton Long

Date

Chair of Examining Committee

Professor Rachel Kousser

Date

Executive Officer

Professor Romy Golan
Professor Rosemarie Bletter
Professor Barry Bergdoll

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

THE BAUHAUS WALL PAINTING WORKSHOP: MURAL PAINTING TO WALLPAPERING, ART TO PRODUCT

By
MORGAN RIDLER

Adviser: Professor Rose-Carol Washton Long

The wall painting workshop at the Bauhaus was established in fall 1919, the first semester of the famed and influential German school of art, architecture, and design. Over the course of the next thirteen years, the workshop experimented with many techniques, philosophies, and strategies for painting, coloring, and covering wall surfaces. This dissertation analyzes the evolving approaches of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop. Early Masters of Form, Oskar Schlemmer and Wassily Kandinsky, oversaw abstract and figurative murals like those developed for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition, and the student wall painters used color to form and mold architectural spaces in, for example, Walter Gropius's colored office and the experimental Haus am Horn. In 1924 Kandinsky identified color as the workshop's medium, which was applied in a variety of approaches by the former students and later leaders of the workshop, Hinnerk Scheper and Alfred Arndt. Arndt's painting scheme in Haus Auerbach and Scheper's supervision of the coloration of the new Bauhaus Dessau school building are central to this dissertation and provide excellent examples of these two wall painters' approaches and differing philosophies. In 1929, during Hannes Meyer's directorship at the Bauhaus, a new opportunity arose for the workshop to design mass-produced wall color, which would enable color to be more efficiently, cheaply, and uniformly applied. Subsequently, Bauhaus wallpaper became the most profitable Bauhaus product and was quickly hanging on the walls of large housing estates and in retail stores throughout Germany. Murals, wall painting schemes, and

wallpapers beyond the Bauhaus, in the architecture of, for example, Bruno Taut and Le Corbusier, provide comprehensive and international comparisons for the Bauhaus projects. This dissertation explores the many restored and recreated Bauhaus wall paintings, while addressing the frictions inherent in collaborations between architect and wall painter and the tension in merging color with architectural form at the Bauhaus.

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Introduction

In 1929, ten years after the founding of the Bauhaus and its wall painting workshop, Wassily Kandinsky, the one-time head Bauhaus wall painter, echoed the frequent call for “bare walls” in the architecture of the period: “That ideal wall, where nothing stands, against which nothing leans, on which no picture hangs, where nothing is to be seen.”¹ For Kandinsky the wall was “egocentric...self-assertive, chaste” and “romantic.” The bare wall stood for new building without, as Kandinsky labeled them, “misbegotten works” that had once strewn these surfaces.² This essay, written at the end of the 1920s, encapsulated the decade-long debate over the painting and coloration of walls and the pressure encountered by painters at the Bauhaus. Although Kandinsky praised the “bare wall,” he also celebrated the students and masters of the school who continued to paint. Despite the growing prevalence of white walls in modern architecture, the wall painters at the Bauhaus continually believed that the wall was a key site for the use of paint and color.

From its conception in 1919, the Bauhaus wall painting workshop’s attention was, quite obviously, fixed on the surfaces of buildings. In the early years, the role of the Bauhaus wall painter was uncertain, for without an architecture department wall painting appeared premature and the workshop was left to paint hallways and studios of the Weimar school. As the Bauhaus started to build the workshop painted the walls and ceilings of the new structures in a variety of colors and with many techniques. By the 1933 closure of the school, Bauhaus wallpaper, the wall painting workshop’s most successful project, was also the school’s most profitable product and was a rare triumph in its long sought after union with industry. This dissertation examines the

¹ Wassily Kandinsky, “Bare Wall” (1929), in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth Clement Lindsay and Peter Virgo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 732.

² *Ibid.*, 734.

many facets of the wall painting workshop throughout the school's many phases. For the wall painting workshop, the wall could be enhanced, improved, defied, or negated with paint and color. It painted the walls of the school buildings and also took outside commissions. It experimented with many techniques, styles, and strategies for covering wall surfaces through its many phases and many leaders, from Johannes Itten, Oskar Schlemmer, and Kandinsky, to Hinnerk Scheper, and Alfred Arndt. The projects ranged from expressionist and constructivist inspired murals, to wall color schemes designed specifically to enhance or transform new Bauhaus buildings, to industrially produced wall color via wallpaper.

The workshop's projects have often been overlooked and a reason for the limited scholarship on the colored walls of the Bauhaus lies in their ephemerality. Any study on the wall painting workshop must deal with this problem: the lack of visual material—no original Bauhaus wall paintings survive. The originals were not effectively or extensively documented when painted and they were certainly not saved or valued in the years following the school's closing. Within years of their creation, as the political and artistic climate in Germany changed, all of these paintings were easily, quickly, and irreverently painted over or destroyed. The wallpaper was the workshop's greatest triumph, but it is also one of the least well known Bauhaus products. Many people who have a basic knowledge of the school are not aware of wallpaper and many, mistakenly, find its existence anathema to what they believe the Bauhaus represents.

While this dissertation analyzes the history and development of wall painting at the Bauhaus and the workshop's extensive use of paint and color, it also recognizes the wall as a unique and singular site of intersection, a nexus where the two worlds of art and architecture converge and collide. From the viewpoint of the modern artist and architect, walls were critical and meaningful surfaces, both a structural element of the building and a blank surface ready for

treatment and the application of art. As generations of painters before them, many modern artists from the 1910s to the 1930s painted directly onto the wall. In modern architecture, walls were commonly believed to be white, pure, cleansed of decoration and ornament of the nineteenth century, praised for their simplicity and honesty, and criticized for being sterile and cold. They were for much of the 1920s not entirely white but were also colorful, polychrome surfaces. Le Corbusier, for example, called for whitewashing and then used color extensively in his buildings. As Kandinsky stated in 1929, “many people,” architects, designers and critics, had opinions on what should be on the wall. These friends of the “bare wall,” as Kandinsky described them, “insist that we should only paint walls,” and “only inside” or “only outside,” and some even “allow us to paint pictures straight on to the wall.”³

The phrase “wall painting,” therefore, encompasses on the one hand, murals—art applied to the wall surface—and on the other, house painting—walls painted or colored in solid hue. The practice of painting directly onto the wall is older than architecture. The paintings on the walls of Chauvet Cave in southern France, date from approximately 30,000 BCE. From Egyptian and Native American wall paintings to the frescos of ancient Greece, ancient Rome, and the Italian Renaissance, painting directly onto the wall was a traditional, widespread, and fundamental technique. In the first decades of the twentieth century, salon art and easel painting was increasingly seen as bourgeois and politically and functionally useless. A drive to paint on walls, and especially for avant-garde artists, wall painting became a favored approach and artists strove for involvement and control of the walls of modern architecture. Examples include the murals preferred by revolutionaries, like the Mexican muralists or the constructivist *Prouns* of El

³ Ibid., 733.

Lissitzky, or by fascist regimes.⁴ As Romy Golan has discussed, the common urge to make murals in the 1920s, 1930s, and into the postwar period resulted not only in paintings affixed to the wall, but also in mobile, or as she described, “nomadic” murals. These are works that are paradoxical, mounted on architecture yet separate, ornament or not, and they reflected an anxiety concerning their identity and meaning as permanent works of art.⁵

Walls serve a double function: they are structural—constructing and dividing space—and they are a surface—surrounding and sheathing space. This dual nature makes the walls crucially important for any building. Yet most histories of modern architecture privilege discussions of volume, space, materials, and structure, and the walls are rarely discussed in detail. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, in their important 1932 book *The International Style*, considered the issue briefly, describing the walls of the new style as no longer structural but as “merely subordinate elements fitted like screens between the supports or carried like a shell outside of them.”⁶ For Hitchcock and Johnson, the walls serve to define the volume of the space and should be a continuous plane, like a skin for the building; although they are only secondary to the steel structure and volumetric form. Recent discussions about modern architecture have reinterpreted the wall’s importance. Beatriz Colomina described the wall as the necessary and

⁴ For a discussion of murals and wall paintings in Fascism see the two volumes *1935: gli artisti nell’università* and *1935: la questione della pittura murale*, ed. Simonetta Lux and Ester Coen (Rome: Multigrafica, 1985); and *Avanguardia, tradizione, ideologia: itinerario attraverso un ventennio di dibattito sulla pittura e la plastica murale*, ed. Simonetta Lux (Rome: Bagatto Libri, 1990); among others discussed in Romy Golan, *Muralnomad: The Paradox of Wall Painting, Europe 1927–1957* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁵ Golan, *Muralnomad*, 1–5.

⁶ Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (New York: Norton, 1932), 55.

critical separator between public and private space, inside and outside, and in modern architecture “the wall is at once displaced and given an unprecedented importance”⁷ and:

It is space that is not made of walls but of images. Images as walls. Or as Le Corbusier put it, ‘walls of light.’ That is, the walls that define the space are no longer solid walls punctuated by small windows but have dematerialized, thinned down with new building technologies and replaced by extended windows, lines of glass whose views now define the space. The walls that are not transparent now float in the space of the house rather than produce it.⁸

For Colomina these glass planes and transparent walls are images for the viewing or seeing of architecture, and thus imperative to her discussion of architecture and media. The workshop wing for the new Bauhaus building in Dessau, designed by Walter Gropius and completed in 1926, fits this description, with glass curtain walls replacing its thick masonry walls. In it, however, some solid walls remained, and in this dissertation I focus on the structural and partition walls, which despite becoming dematerialized and floating, still exist, still function as definers of space and structure, and still result in flat surfaces. In the Dessau Bauhaus, which is key for this dissertation, the wall painting workshop’s color scheme enhanced the comprehension of the structure and function of the building. The solid walls around the iconic large windows operate to frame the transparent glass, and the colored surfaces intensified the effects of the windows.

Solid walls in modern architecture are often overlooked and not problematized. If they are mentioned at all, they are assumed to be white or “bare” as Kandinsky described them, without ornament, and a pure manifestation of the architectural structure. Hitchcock and Johnson

⁷ Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 27.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 6. The wall, although it is defined as critical and its surface treatment are discussed, is not subject of Colomina’s text. Rather, she wrote about the images, mass media, and photography of modern architecture, such as the buildings of Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier, and the transference of architecture into primarily black-and-white media, color not included.

emphasized that in the International Style, color was to be restrained, such that primarily off-white or white and the natural colors of the materials were preferred.⁹ They admitted that for a period of time in the 1920s color was used often, but the bright primary colors soon “ceased to startle and began to bore; its mechanical sharpness and freshness became rapidly tawdry.” They added, “If architecture is not to resemble billboards, color should be both technically and psychologically permanent.”¹⁰ The color experiments of the early 1920s were thoroughly warned against and dismissed by many supporters of modernist architecture in the 1930s and after, and the heralds of the “bare wall,” as identified by Kandinsky in 1929, succeeded. Our current understanding of color and modern architecture, for the most part, continues this trend.

In his 1925 book *The Decorative Art of Today*, Le Corbusier directly addressed the wall surface, critiquing ornament and decoration, and pronouncing in his Law of Ripolin that “every citizen is required to replace his hangings, his damasks, his wallpapers, his stencils, with a plain coat of white ripolin.”¹¹ Le Corbusier’s statements about whitewashed walls have been seen as a battle cry for white modernism. Despite this rhetoric, beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, interest in the architectural polychromy of the 1920s grew. Le Corbusier’s blatant disregard for his own call for whiteness in his buildings and with the resources of his archive and his statements on color have led to many discussions of polychromy.¹² At the Bauhaus, white walls were certainly prevalent, but there were also many designers in the wall painting workshop who added paint

⁹ Hitchcock and Johnson, *International Style*, 87.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 87–88.

¹¹ Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today* (1925; repr., Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 188.

¹² Hitchcock and Johnson identified Purism and De Stijl as the two branches of colored architecture and they have remained the primary focus of studies on color in modern architecture. Hitchcock and Johnson, *International Style*; Jan De Heer, *The Architectonic Colour: Polychromy in the Purist Architecture of Le Corbusier*, trans. George Hall (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2009), 14–15; and Arthur Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale: Le Corbusier’s Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1997).

and color to the walls of the school. Bauhaus wall painting projects integrated painting and color onto the walls to transform or enhance the architecture, and this dissertation's discussion of these projects both amends the presumed whiteness of the Bauhaus and reinforces the centrality of the unification of art and architecture to the Bauhaus idea. Three types of visual evidence for Bauhaus wall paintings remain: works on paper, contemporary photographs, and a handful of recent reconstructions. In addition, written descriptions provide supplemental and, in some cases, the only evidence of the existence of projects. With only these fragmentary records it has been difficult to a reimagine these long-lost paintings.

Renovations or reconstructions of a number of wall paintings began in the 1970s when in 1976 Werner Claus remade Herbert Bayer's 1923 Weimar works, followed by Herbert Schiefelbein and Bruno Dolinski 1979-1980 recreation of Oskar Schlemmer's paintings and reliefs of the same year. These reconstruction projects significantly increased in the 1990s and 2000s with the restoration of Haus Auerbach, a private commission design by Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, and the Dessau school buildings. They have been incredibly important for understanding the original production of the workshop and have brought more attention and public awareness to the colorfulness of Bauhaus wall painting projects. Since completion, in 2005, of the extensive and scientifically accurate restorations of the original wall colors visitors to the Bauhaus school buildings in Dessau are often surprised by the coloration, inside and out. More reconstructions and restorations of Bauhaus wall painting projects are currently in progress or planned at the Dessau-Törten housing estate, in Adolf Meyer's Weimar apartment, and in Alfred Arndt's Haus des Volkes, in Probstzella, Germany. These provide further visual evidence that Bauhaus architecture was not purely white.

How to Paint at the Bauhaus

The Bauhaus was founded on the belief in a unification of the arts, in the creation of the new building. In this new total work, painting was essential. “The ultimate aim of all visual arts is the complete building!” Gropius declared in the first line of his April 1919 Bauhaus Program.¹³ And he specifically used the term *Einheitskunstwerk*, the “unified work.”¹⁴ Gropius’s manifesto, in its praise of unification and education reform, was typical of the art school reform and architectural theories put forth by many of his contemporaries.¹⁵ For many expressionist architects, a new architecture was needed in the wake of World War I. They believed buildings could change the world and, like Gropius, they believed the walls in these new buildings should to be painted, covered, and integrated with the whole. Painting was always a vital part of this new unified Bauhaus work. Gropius appointed many painters to a variety of leadership roles in his school. At the beginning, the official home of painting was in the wall painting workshop. It quickly became apparent that it was not clear if painting was to be subordinate to the architectural space or whether the painter was autonomous and equal to participate alongside the architect in the development of the new building. As will be discussed throughout this dissertation, for wall painters such as Herbert Bayer or Alfred Arndt, painting was relatively

¹³ Walter Gropius, “Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar” (1919), in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans M. Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Wolfgang Jabs and Basil Gilbert (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 31.

¹⁴ Walter Gropius, “Programm des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar, April 1919,” in *Das Bauhaus, 1919–1933: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin und Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler (Bramsche: Rasch, 1962), 38–41.

¹⁵ See, for example, Bruno Taut, “Arbeitsrat Für Kunst Program, 1918,” in *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. Rose-Carol Washton Long, trans. ed. Nancy Roth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 192–194; Marcel Franciscono, *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar: The Ideals and Artistic Theories of Its Founding Years* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971); and John V Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics, and the German State, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

independent and free from the limitation of architecture, and could even transform and change a space. But for other prominent Bauhaus wall painters, including Hinnerk Scheper, painting was subordinate to architecture. Kandinsky stressed the importance of the various arts not dominating each another; painting and architecture should be equal participants in his synthesis of the arts. Although Bauhaus wall painters all believed that the incorporation of painting or color onto the walls was critical to the greater whole, this diverging of viewpoints resonated throughout the workshop's existence.

Wall painting at the Bauhaus is often overlooked or short-changed in the extensive literature about the school. Historical objects such as chairs, lamps, and teapots exhibited in museums dominate common narratives.¹⁶ Ephemeral, lost, or temporary works, as well as often-discussed theater productions and little-known wall paintings, complicate the school's innovations.¹⁷ As Juliet Koss noted, theater often falls between disciplines, and wall painting shares this indeterminate status—between art, architecture, and design. Extensive studies of the school's history often contain only brief essays or sections on the wall painting workshop and their projects. The classic and seminal history of the Bauhaus, Hans Wingler's *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, published in German in 1962 and then in English in 1969, laid the foundation for most later studies.¹⁸ Wingler, who provided a history of the school organized around major periods and locations, included many wall painting workshop related documents,

¹⁶ This focus on objects is most recently continued in Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei, eds., *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2009).

¹⁷ Juliet Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," *Art Bulletin* 85, no. 4 (2003): 724–45.

¹⁸ Hans Maria Wingler, *Das Bauhaus, 1919–1933: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin*. (Bramsche: Rasch, 1962); Hans Maria Wingler, *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976).

from the early 1923 exhibition to the later Bauhaus wallpaper.¹⁹ The black and white illustrations depict Gropius's office in Weimar and the exterior of Haus Auerbach in Jena, both from 1924, and other important examples of colorful Bauhaus architecture, although he does not discuss the wall paintings and colors in these buildings.

Magdalena Droste updated Wingler's study in 1990 with her important *Bauhaus 1919–1933*, which has since been republished many times.²⁰ She chronicled all the phases of the school with depth and clarity.²¹ At the time of her research, it was commonly believed that many of the plans and projects of the wall painting workshop were never realized, including the coloration of the Bauhaus school buildings in Dessau. Droste praised the Bauhaus wallpaper, which she understood to be the only productive and successful wall painting workshop project.²² And although she did not discuss wall painting at length, her work established the essential history of the school upon which to build.

A handful of German language texts consider the wall painting workshop in more depth.

The most extensive, and least well-known, is Wulf Herzogenrath's *Oskar Schlemmer: Die*

¹⁹ This includes Oskar Schlemmer, "Design Principles for the Painting and Sculpture Decoration of the Workshop Building of the Staatliche Bauhaus from 'Das Kunstblatt' vol 7, 1923," in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 64–65; Wassily Kandinsky, "The Work of the Wall-Painting Workshop of the Staatliche Bauhaus" (April 1924), in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Wolfgang Jabs and Basil Gilbert (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 80.

²⁰ Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933* (Cologne: Taschen, 1990); Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933* (Cologne: Taschen, 2002). The book was originally published in 1990 with subsequent editions in many languages including English translations in: 1998, 2002, and 2006. Throughout the dissertation I use the 2002 edition.

²¹ In her discussion of the founding and establishment of the school, including the early workshops, Droste does not mention the wall painting workshop. Rather, it comes up in the context of a discussion of the school's reorganization after Itten left. Later in the book, each workshop is given a dedicated section, but the mural painting workshop is grouped together with the stained glass workshop, which in 1924 became a subdivision of the mural painting workshop. Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933*, 34.

²² *Ibid.*, 88.

Wandgestaltung der Neuen Architektur (1973). This expansion of his dissertation about Oskar Schlemmer's wall paintings connected Schlemmer's approach to other artist's wall paintings including the wall painting workshop, but his contribution is outdated and unremittingly focused on Schlemmer, rather than the Bauhaus wall painting workshop more broadly.²³ Some short essays in exhibition catalogues addressed the wall painting workshop, as did Hajo Düchting's *Farbe am Bauhaus*. This 1996 book argued that the projects of the wall painting workshop paralleled the overall development of the school.²⁴ Sections in the 1988 exhibition catalogues, *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier* and *Experiment Bauhaus* discussed the workshop in some detail, but essentially included slightly different versions of the same research.²⁵ Rainer Wick, in his 1983 essay "Bauhausarchitektur und Farbe," published in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar*, provided a valuable analysis and raised many of the critical questions one must ask in order to understand the relationship between color, architecture, and wall painting. Although his focus was on the important connections between the Bauhaus, de Stijl, and Bruno Taut, Wick, like Düchting and other pre-2000 scholars, was primarily speculative about what the Bauhaus wall painting looked like, without concrete examples or evidence for them.

The reconstruction of wall painting projects in the 1990s and 2000s sparked more updated and comprehensive research on the workshop and occasioned the 2005 Bauhaus Archiv

²³ Wulf Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer: Die Wandgestaltung der neuen Architektur* (Munich: Prestel, 1973).

²⁴ Hajo Düchting, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei: Zum Problem des 'Farbigen Bauens,'" in *Farbe am Bauhaus: Synthese und Synästhesie* (Berlin: Mann, 1996), 111–127. Düchting discusses at length the influence of De Stijl on the wall painting workshop.

²⁵ Wulf Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung," in *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten Auf Papier*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1988), 169–88; Christian Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Experiment Bauhaus: Das Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin (West) zu Gast im Bauhaus Dessau*, ed. Peter Hahn, Magdalena Droste, and Jeannine Fiedler (Berlin: Kupfergraben Verlagsgesellschaft, 1988), 282–85.

exhibition *Colorful! The Wall-Painting Workshop at the Bauhaus*. This exhibition and the accompanying catalogue by Renate Scheper provided a detailed history and a wealth of information about the workshop. In her research for the essay and catalogue entries for a wide variety of projects, Scheper mined the various Bauhaus-related archives, including the minutes of the Bauhaus Masters' Council meetings, and told the detailed story of the workshop, with its changing leadership and the different commissions. Scheper's work is indispensable for this dissertation because it encourages further analysis of the wall painting projects, beyond the archival details. She introduced Bauhaus wall painting into the context of polychrome architecture, but only scratched the surface. This dissertation will more deeply explore particular projects, will compare wall painting approaches within the Bauhaus, beyond those of one-time leader Hinnerk Scheper, and will investigate connections to contemporary wall paintings and wallpaper outside the Bauhaus. As the daughter-in-law of longtime Bauhaus wall painting master Hinnerk Scheper, Renate Scheper's relationship complicates the narrative. She and her husband Dirk Scheper own a large portion of Hinnerk Scheper's and his wife Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp's works and papers. While they have significantly contributed to the exposure of both of these Bauhäusler (Bauhaus people) through exhibitions and catalogues, they are not neutral outsiders, but are inherently biased and focused on preserving their share of the Bauhaus legacy.²⁶

The 2008 book *Bauhaus-Alben 3: Weberei, Wandmalerei, Glasmalerei, Buchbinderei, Steinbildhauerei* (The Weaving Workshop, The Wall-Painting Workshop, The Glass-Painting Workshop, The Bookbinding Workshop, The Stone-Carving Workshop), edited by Klaus-Jürgen

²⁶ Renate Scheper, *Foto, Hinnerk Scheper: Ein Bauhäusler als Bildjournalist in Dessau* (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991); Renate Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper: Farbgestalter, Fotograf, Denkmalpfleger: vom Bauhaus geprägt* (Bramsche: Rasch, 2007); Renate Scheper, *Phantastiken: die Bauhäuslerin Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp* (Bramsche: Rasch, 2012). I visited Renate Scheper in the summer of 2013. She was very helpful but it was clear that her focus is on Scheper and not the whole workshop.

Winkler, included the most recent research on individual workshops of the Weimar Bauhaus and a very detailed essay on the Weimar wall painting workshop by Winkler, with preliminary research by student Axel Hänsch.²⁷ Published in German and English, this essay, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” continued Renate Scheper’s careful primary source work and documented the projects and development of the wall painting workshop in Weimar. Winkler used previously unpublished photographs, which are significant for this dissertation, but he and his students focus on the Weimar period only.

Both Scheper and Winkler texts were dedicated to archival and documentary details of the workshop and the projects, and therefore, they somewhat neglected the larger picture. The specific Bauhaus projects were not compared with outside works in Europe, and the theories of Bauhäusler wall painters were not discussed in relationship to other artists and designers. I will use already conducted basic research by Scheper and Winkler as a starting point for my own analysis of the wall painting workshop within the context of larger debates about the “wall” in the 1920s and 1930s and the integration of color and architecture.

The White Walls

Mark Wigley exposed the construct of the white wall in his important 1995 book *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, in which he identified a “blindness to the white walls” in most modern architecture historiography. He linked this to a denial of the role of fashion and a refusal to understand the white walls as another layer of

²⁷ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” in *Bauhaus Alben 3: The Weaving Workshop, The Wall-Painting Workshop, The Glass-Painting Workshop, The Bookbinding Workshop, The Stone-Carving Workshop*, ed. Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, trans. Steven Lindberg, (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2008), 3:120–49. This text is part of a four-book series on the Weimar Bauhaus based on photographs of original Bauhaus works and analysis of original documents.

clothing, as a different kind of dress for the building.²⁸ As Paul Overy later discussed in *Light, Air and Openness: Modern Architecture Between the Wars*, published in 2007, the preoccupation with sanitation, hygiene, light, and air in modern architecture also included an obsession with whitewashing and white walls.²⁹ The white wall as an icon of modern architecture was established in 1927 at the *Weissenhofsiedlung* in Stuttgart, but as Wigley convincingly argued “modern architecture was never simply white.”³⁰ Part of the focus on the wall surfaces in modern architecture should be linked back to the nineteenth-century German architect and art historian Gottfried Semper. Colomina and Wigley both built on Semper’s discussions of the wall as a dressing and as one of the four elements of architecture. According to Semper, walls in the earliest huts were initially textiles, carpets, and wall hangings, and these original building materials guided architecture to the present.³¹ The wall’s significance remained an important concept for designers and architects after Semper, and since then scholars have increasingly understood Semper’s importance to modern architecture’s development and discourse.³²

Recent scholarship on architectural polychromy, from the 1990s and 2000s, has focused on Le Corbusier and the polychromy of Purism or de Stijl, and with these texts a more complex

²⁸ Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), xxi. Wigley’s reading is associated to Mary McLeod, “Undressing Architecture: Fashion, Gender and Modernity,” in *Architecture: In Fashion*, ed. Deborah Fausch (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), 38-123.

²⁹ Paul Overy, *Light, Air and Openness: Modern Architecture Between the Wars* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, xv.

³¹ Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 103–04.

³² Harry Francis Mallgrave, “Introduction,” in *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 41–44. Golan discussed Le Corbusier’s tapestries and his concept of the “Muralnomad” alongside Semper. Golan, *Muralnomad*, 241.

appreciation of wall treatments and wall colors has begun to emerge.³³ Arthur Rüegg's *Polychromie Architecturale: Color Keyboards from 1931 to 1959*, published first in 1997 and revised in 2006, examined Le Corbusier's polychromy, using examples like Villa La Roche and his development of monochrome wallpapers with the Salubra wallpaper manufacturer.³⁴ Jan de Heer's *The Architectonic Colour: Polychromy in the Purist Architecture of Le Corbusier*, published in 2009, is the most recent text that retraces and reexamines Le Corbusier's complex and evolving use and theory of color, and his Purist architecture.³⁵ Like most literature on color in 1920s architecture, de Heer discussed two branches of polychromy, the Purist and the de Stijl.³⁶ Fernand Léger's mural painting and theory of polychromy have been discussed, for example in the 2013 exhibition and catalogue *Léger: Modern Art and the Metropolis*, which compared Léger's works with those of Le Corbusier, de Stijl, El Lissitzky and Willi Baumeister.³⁷ This catalogue charts the international interest in mural and wall painting, the integration of art and painting on the walls of real spaces. These scholars often discussed the historiographical ignorance of the colored walls and polychromy in architecture of 1920s and

³³ William Braham discussed Amedee Ozenfant, Le Corbusier's collaborator for *L'Esprit Nouveau* and fellow Purist, and his use of color in architecture, particularly in the later 1930s writings; William W. Braham, *Modern Color/Modern Architecture: Amedee Ozenfant and the Genealogy of Color in Modern Architecture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002). See also Allan Doig, *Theo van Doesburg: Painting into Architecture, Theory into Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

³⁴ Arthur Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale: Le Corbusier's Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1997). Rüegg compares the Swiss architect's use of color with De Stijl interiors and with Bruno Taut's polychrome, but not with the Bauhaus.

³⁵ Heer, *The Architectonic Colour*.

³⁶ *Ibid.* It is not surprising that most scholars focus on the well-known given the fame of French modernist developments and celebrated artists and designers such as Le Corbusier, Leger, and Ozenfant and the high modernist Dutch artist Mondrian.

³⁷ Christopher Green and Fernand Léger, *Léger and the Avant-Garde* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976); Ruth Ann K Meyer, "Fernand Leger's Mural Paintings, 1922–1955" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1980); Anna Vallye, ed., *Léger: Modern Art and the Metropolis* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2013).

1930s, but focused only on Le Corbusier, Léger, and Purism. Nancy Troy's 1983 *The De Stijl Environment*, a groundbreaking study of the integration of de Stijl painting into architectural spaces, addressed the widespread international interest in bringing the theories of color and painting to the world of architecture. But Troy also did not discuss other contemporaneous examples in depth.³⁸ Yve-Alain Bois has focused on Mondrian's theories about architecture and their relation to other de Stijl figures, but again without examining the international context.³⁹ All of these texts work to correct the common impression of whiteness in modern architecture, but German cases of polychromy are rarely referenced. German language literature has focused primarily on the colorful housing projects of Bruno Taut, relegating the Bauhaus to outsider status.⁴⁰ In regards to international polychrome architecture, the discussions of Bauhaus—the bastion of modern design, developers of innovative chairs and lamps, perhaps the most famous home of modernism—have been limited.

Bauhaus Polychromy and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*

Besides the ephemerality and the lack of extant and well-known Bauhaus examples of wall painting, another reason for the marginalization of Bauhaus polychromy resides in the complexity and variations of the works. The use of color in architecture and its achievement in the wall painting workshop at the Bauhaus cannot be defined quickly and simply. Wall painting at the Bauhaus was not only fashion, or a dress layer for building, as Wigley argued, but it

³⁸ Nancy J Troy, *The De Stijl Environment* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

³⁹ Yve-Alain Bois, "Mondrian and the Theory of Architecture," *Assemblage*, no. 4 (October 1, 1987): 103–30.

⁴⁰ Eckhard Herrel, "Farbe in der Architektur der Moderne," in *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland, 1900 bis 1950: Expressionismus und Neue Sachlichkeit*, ed. Vittorio Magnano Lampugnani (Stuttgart: G. Hatje, 1994); Marco Pogacnik, "Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei," in *Kaleidoskop: Hoelzel in der Avantgarde*, ed. Marion Ackermann, Gerhard Leistner, and Daniel Spanke (Heidelberg: Kehrer, 2009), 100–8.

worked in other ways as well: it was orientation, it was art, and it was a product. One of the workshop's approaches was to paint the walls with color schemes to coordinate architectural spaces, yet it also developed other conduits for color, such as wallpaper. The wall painting workshop was always changing, experimenting, and evolving.

Wall painting at the Bauhaus began as mural painting, as art painted on walls. Semper's analysis of the wall had guided nineteenth-century artists such as William Morris, who focused his attention on the wall surface by designing murals and many wallpaper patterns.⁴¹ In 1882 he wrote: "Whatever you have in your room think of the walls, for they are that which makes your house your home."⁴² Like the British Arts and Crafts,⁴³ Art Nouveau, and *Jugendstil* designers, the direct forefathers of the Bauhaus paid close attention to the wall in their *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁴⁴ These artists and designers, like Henry van de Velde, rejected traditional easel painting in favor of the design of utilitarian objects, architecture, and interiors. The term *Gesamtkunstwerk*, commonly translated as the "total work of art," is not an idea that is easily relayed into English.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Maev Kennedy, "Pre-Raphaelite Mural Discovered in William Morris's Red House," *The Guardian*, August 18, 2013.

⁴² William Morris, *Lesser Arts of Life* (London: ElecBook, 1877), 34. William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts Movement were important influences on the development of the Deutscher Werkbund and an important precedent for the Bauhaus. For example, Herman Muthesius, a German architect and school reformer, studied English Arts and Crafts and imported many of its ideas to Germany. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*.

⁴³ The English Arts and Crafts Movement abandoned traditional easel painting and returned to craft, created practical arts for the home, and rejected cheap poorly made mass produced goods of the middle of the nineteenth century.

⁴⁴ Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius* (London: Penguin Books, 1960); Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*. (New York: Praeger, 1967). Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement were important forefathers to the Bauhaus and in texts they are the progenitors of the modern design movements.

⁴⁵ The integration and unification of wall decoration, furnishings, and quotidian objects within the space and structure of a building has often been described as a *gesamtkunstwerk*. This English phrase implies a totalizing effect. Problematically, many totalitarian regimes of the 1930s and 1940s, including Hitler's Third Reich, used a total-immersion tactic and the creation of a total work of art as a tool of propaganda and nation-building. The *gesamtkunstwerk* was

Juliet Koss's located this idea at the center of modernism and investigating Richard Wagner's development and use of the term.⁴⁶ Wagner's two essays, "Art and Revolution" and "The Art-Work of the Future," both written in 1849, described a new total work, which unified the three arts—poetry, music, and dance—and which would be possible only in the future democratic and united Germany. Walls and wall decoration were not explicitly discussed by Wagner; his total work of art was an opera, not a building or interior. But painting was an important complementary art, along with architecture and sculpture, in the creation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Wagner wrote in "The Art-Work of the Future" that architecture needed the painter: "Plastic *Architecture* here feels her bounds...and casts herself, athirst for love, into the arms of Painting."⁴⁷ For the stage, the ability of painting to create the illusion of nature gave it an edge over architecture. According to Wagner, the painter submitted to the great opera, but also pushed it to its greatest heights.⁴⁸ As other artists in the later nineteenth century expanded the idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk* beyond the restraints of the theater and into architecture and interior design, these paintings and stage sets became the walls of everyday life.

criticized by Theodor Adorno and others as anti-modern. Many scholars have been reconsidering and reexamining examples of the *gesamtkunstwerk* within unique historical contexts. See Juliet Koss, *Modernism after Wagner* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Ralf Beil, Claudia Dillmann, and Institut Mathildenhöhe (Stadtmuseum Darmstadt), *The Total Artwork in Expressionism: Art, Film, Literature, Theater, Dance, and Architecture, 1905–25* (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2011); and David Roberts, *The Total Work of Art in European Modernism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011). Many of these examples and the problems of this term were discussed at the April 4–7, 2013 Bauhaus-Colloquium "Henry Van de Velde and the Total Work of Art" in Weimar, Germany.

⁴⁶ Koss, *Modernism after Wagner*. Koss was particularly helpful for her discussion of the development, meaning, and importance of the *gesamtkunstwerk*. As she discussed, Wagner did not invent the term but he made it famous in 1848–49 revolutionary Dresden and later in exile in Zurich

⁴⁷ Richard Wagner, "The Art-Work of the Future" (1849), in *The Art-Work of the Future, and Other Works* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 186. Italics in original.

⁴⁸ The paintings used are not going to be panel pictures or small easel painting but large works used for the stage scenery or backdrops.

Paintings within the architecture could operate in two ways: they could be incorporated completely into the total design, merging with and enhancing the unified whole, or they could stand out, be complementary but independent, and not succumb to the total design. Semper, Wagner's close friend in revolutionary Dresden, envisioned a union of painting and architecture, so that the two distinct arts should not dominate each other, but should collaborate "and enter into a free alliance."⁴⁹ For Semper, paintings on the wall had to be mindful of the original wall surfaces, the original materials of enclosure: "The wall (wand) should never be permitted to lose its original meaning as a spatial enclosure by what is represented on it; it is always advisable when painting walls to remain mindful of the carpet as the earliest spatial enclosure."⁵⁰ He further explained that walls should not be painted so that they would overtake the original meaning of architecture.⁵¹ In the wake of Semper's theory, the wall became a supercharged surface in the building, to which both artist and architect laid claim.

As Marco Pogacnik discussed in his 2009 essay "Gebaute Bilder: Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei," (Built Pictures: Adolf Hölzel and Wall Painting), the wall transformed into an artist's object, thereby allowing the "*Befreiung der Wand*" (release of the wall) from the building.⁵² Similarly, Alina Payne has considered ornament's elimination from the vocabulary of architecture in the early twentieth century and the inverse rise of the importance of the object. For Payne, the Bauhaus was the "endgame" in the trajectory of the object, but was wall painting ornament or object? Whether ornament or object, wall painting was definitively a decorative art and as scholars such as Nancy Troy have argued the decorative arts are critical to understanding

⁴⁹ Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, 127.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Semper was a strong believer in the polychrome element of Greek architecture, which was a dominant controversy in 1830s architecture theory. See Mallgrave, "Introduction"; and David Van Zanten, *The Architectural Polychromy of the 1830s* (New York: Garland, 1977).

⁵² Pogacnik, "Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei," 102.

modernism in the early twentieth century.⁵³ Perhaps it will be possible to use Payne's analysis to consider a relationship between the removal of decoration and ornament from the terminology of wall painting workshop around 1921 (discussed in chapter one) and the development of objectified wall color via wallpaper (discussed in chapter four). But was decoration and ornament really removed from wall painting or was it just hidden, as Jenny Anger similarly argued in her book *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art*. Like many modern artists, Klee tried to redress or compensate for the decorative in his easel paintings, in effect hiding and disguising it.⁵⁴ As painters moved their work out of frames and onto the wall in the years following World War I, another question was produced: Could painting be independent and therefore equal to architecture, or would painting be subordinate to architecture? Many artists of this period were exploring these questions. Léger experimented with bringing his easel paintings into real space and wrote often about the integration of painting into architecture in the 1920s, culminating in his book *Fonctions de la peinture* (Functions of Painting) published in French in 1965.⁵⁵ German artist Willi Baumeister, a friend of Bauhäusler Oskar Schlemmer, was also experimenting with wall painting in the 1920s. Peter Chametzky's essay "From Werkbund to Entartung: Willi Baumeister's 'Wall Pictures'" in the 2002 anthology *The Built Surface* discussed Baumeister's "wall pictures," (*mauerbild* as opposed to the Bauhaus *wandmalerei*), emphasizing their similar matrix of ideas but divergent results.⁵⁶ Sarah Beth Hinderliter, in her

⁵³ Nancy Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) 1.

⁵⁴ Jenny Anger, *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 5.

⁵⁵ Fernand Léger, *Fonctions de la peinture* (Paris: Gonthier, 1965); Fernand Léger, *Functions of Painting* (New York: Viking Press, 1973).

⁵⁶ Peter Chametzky, "From *Werkbund* to *Entartung*: Willi Baumeister's 'Wall Pictures'," in *The Built Surface*, vol. 2, *Architecture and the Pictorial Arts from Romanticism to the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Karen Koehler (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 159–85.

2008 dissertation, explored another type of integration of painting into space, Schwitter's *Merz Raum* and Lissitzky's *Proun Rooms*, further emphasizing the international relationships and interest in bringing painting into real space.⁵⁷ Golan also considered different conceptions of murals, expanding the classification and definition of wall painting, although the moving paradoxical murals she identified are not closely related to the Bauhaus wall paintings, which are always fixed, permanent, and found in specific locations.⁵⁸ This dissertation will insert the Bauhaus examples of wall painting in the discussion of the many artists and designers who brought painting and sculpture onto the walls of buildings in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s.

Terminology

Overlooked by Renate Scheper and other scholars who have discussed Bauhaus wall painting is the confusing terminology and translations of the many German words for wall painting. Most literature on the wall painting workshop was originally written in German, and the translations of many wall painting terms have not been problematized. In English only “wall painting” or “mural” are used for the German *Wandmalerei* and the many other related terms. Most translations use the term “wall painting,” as in the English language versions of Wingler's seminal text translated by Wolfgang Jabs and Basil Gilbert.⁵⁹ Droste used the translation “mural painting” in her English language text.⁶⁰ These two terms, “mural painting” and “wall painting” have slightly different meanings or intimations in English. “Mural painting” is often used to describe figurative paintings like those of the famous Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, while

⁵⁷ Sarah Beth Hinderliter, “The Space of Painting : Kurt Schwitters and El Lissitzky” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2008).

⁵⁸ Golan, *Muralnomad*.

⁵⁹ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*.

⁶⁰ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933*. It is unclear if Droste made this translation decision or if the translator, Karen Williams, selected this term.

“wall painting” is more commonly used to describe works such as Sol LeWitt’s abstract conceptual works. Droste’s use of “mural painting” gives a false impression of the workshop’s output.

In addition to translation problems, the term *Wandmalerei* was not consistently used at the Bauhaus. In the early years, *Dekorationsmalerei* (decorative painting) defined the workshop. The changing name and its implications are discussed in chapter one of this dissertation. In addition, German language scholarship on the workshop has used many diverse, more nuanced, and difficult-to-translate terms to discuss the works. The short essay by Michael Siebenbrodt in the 2009 exhibition catalogue *Das Bauhaus Kommt Aus Weimar*, for example, used many German words to discuss the projects of the Weimar *Wandmalereiwerkstatt*, (wall painting workshop).⁶¹ The title of the essay, “Die Wandmalereiwerkstatt: Bild- und Farbräume in Weimar von Oskar Schlemmer bis Hinnerk Scheper,” uses two different terms to discuss the differences between Schlemmer and Scheper’s works: *Bildräume* and *Farbräume*. *Farbräume* combines *farbe* (color but also referencing paint or dye), and *Räume* (rooms, or spaces); combined it means “colored spaces.”⁶² *Bild* has multiple definitions, but primarily refers to a picture or image;

⁶¹ Michael Siebenbrodt, “Die Wandmalereiwerkstatt Bild- und Farbräume in Weimar von Oskar Schlemmer bis Hinnerk Scheper,” in *Das Bauhaus Kommt aus Weimar*, ed. Ute Ackermann and Ulrike Bestgen (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009), 139.

⁶² Oxford-Duden German Dictionary, Oxford Language Dictionaries Online, s.v. “Raum,” accessed August 1, 2013, <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/u11d1def534ea1be0.-564ee49.112b801d22e.-161e>; Oxford-Duden German Dictionary, Oxford Language Dictionaries Online, s.v. “Farbe,” accessed August 1, 2013, <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/u11d1def534ea1be0.-564ee49.112b7f9cc2e.27c8>.

Bildräume is then translated as “pictured spaces.”⁶³ Therefore Schlemmer made “pictured spaces” and Scheper “colored spaces,” both of which are awkward in English.

Later in the text, Siebenbrodt used four other words for wall paintings. Herbert Bayer’s and Wassily Kandinsky’s paintings were labeled *Wandbild*, (wall picture). But Oskar Schlemmer’s paintings are *Wandgemälde*, the classic German word for mural. *Gemälde* by itself refers to traditional easel or panel painting.⁶⁴ Both are types of the *Bildräume* (pictured spaces) referenced in the title and the content of the works helps to define the difference between the two terms, “wall picture” and “wall painting.” Schlemmer’s “wall paintings” are figurative and derive from his easel paintings, and Bayer’s and Kandinsky’s “wall pictures” are abstract designs. The different artistic styles and their content justify the different terminology, but in English there is no way evoke this nuance—they are all “wall paintings” or “murals.”

The *Farbräume*, (colored spaces) referenced in the title of this essay brings more confusion. These spaces are labeled *Wandgestaltung*, (wall design) and *Farbgestaltung* (color design). *Gestaltung* today is usually translated as “shaping, forming, design or arrangement,”⁶⁵ but in the 1920s it was a charged word, meaning “form creation.” The term was used as a reference by the avant-garde, specifically by the journal *G: Materials for Elemental Form-*

⁶³ Oxford-Duden German Dictionary, Oxford Language Dictionaries Online, s.v. “Bild,” accessed August 1, 2013, <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/u11d1def534ea1be0.-564ee49.112b7f5da4e.7101>.

⁶⁴ Oxford-Duden German Dictionary, Oxford Language Dictionaries Online, s.v. “Gemälde,” accessed August 1, 2013, <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/u11d1def534ea1be0.-564ee49.112b7fb6996.-35df>; Oxford-Duden German Dictionary, Oxford Language Dictionaries Online, s.v. “Wandgemälde,” accessed August 1, 2013, <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/csec33873>.

⁶⁵ Maree Airlie and Joyce Littlejohn, *Collins German Dictionary* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 1426.

Creation, to describe a post-representational form, and the process of its creation.⁶⁶ “Wall design” has been used to describe the wall paintings in the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of Gropius’s office in Weimar, while “color design” has been used for the wall paintings in the Haus am Horn. For Siebenbrodt, the nuanced interpretation and meanings behind these terms hints at how these paintings function in their spaces, but one must ask: Do the paintings use color to shape and transform the space or are they just pictures on the walls? Siebenbrodt exploited the ability of the German language to continually be reworked in order to generate specific meanings and new words, although these terms are impossible to succinctly and accurately translate into English. All of these works are paintings on the wall, some with human figures, some with abstract shapes, some just solid colors, but essentially the simple and concise term “wall painting” could describe them all. For this dissertation I will use the term “wall painting” because it is able to encompass both mural painting and the painting of architecture, all examples of painting on the wall.

The Workshop Projects

Although there has been limited study of the overall history of the wall painting workshop, some of the major wall painting projects have generated dedicated texts. The Bauhaus buildings in Dessau have sparked a number of publications, some of which include analyses of

⁶⁶ The key figures of *G* were Hans Richter, Theo van Doesburg, El Lissitzky, Raoul Hausmann, Mies van der Rohe and Werner Graeff. *Gestaltung* is often used in discussion of the Bauhaus, for example, at the Bauhaus Museum in Berlin, and the Museum für Gestaltung. Detlef Mertins and Michael William Jennings, “Introduction: The G-Group and the European Avant-Garde,” in *G: An Avant-garde Journal of Art, Architecture, Design, and Film, 1923-1926* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010).

the colors and wall painting schemes in these buildings.⁶⁷ These discussions, however, often isolate the Dessau projects from the rest of the workshop's production and development. The 2003 book *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer* examined the little known private home built in 1924 and restoration that contains interior paintings by the Alfred Arndt of the wall painting workshop and provided a thorough discussion of this important project but little connection to the workshop.⁶⁸ The Bauhaus wallpaper project has generated focused scholarship.⁶⁹ *Bauhaustapete: Advertising & Success of a Brand-Name*, the only complete study of Bauhaus wallpaper, provided a detailed history of the project, but it was produced in large part by Rasch, the company that began printing Bauhaus wallpaper in 1929 and is still in business.⁷⁰ Other short essays on Bauhaus wallpaper including Sabine Thümmler's "The Noble Simplicity

⁶⁷ Lutz Schobe, "Black and White or Colour? Spatial Design in the Bauhaus Building," in *Bauhaus Dessau: Architecture Design Concept*, ed. Kirsten Baumann (Berlin: Jovis, 2007); Dennis Sharp, *Bauhaus, Dessau: Walter Gropius* (London: Phaidon Press, 1993); Wolfgang Thöner, *The Bauhaus Life: Life and Work in the Masters' Houses Estate in Dessau* (Leipzig: Seemann, 2003); Monika Markgraf, *Archaeology of Modernism: Renovation Bauhaus Dessau* (Berlin: Jovis, 2006); Thomas Danzl, "Konservierung, Restaurierung und Rekonstruktion von Architekturoberflächen am Meisterhaus Muche/Schlemmer," in *Gropius Meisterhaus Muche/Schlemmer: Die Geschichte einer Instandsetzung* (Stuttgart: Krämer, 2003), 152–81; Norbit Michels, "'ich und die farbe sind eins' Die Farbigekeit der Innenräume des Meisterhauses Kandinsky-Klee," in *Architektur Und Kunst: Das Meisterhaus Kandinsky-Klee in Dessau* (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 2000), 37–60.

⁶⁸ Barbara Happe and Martin S. Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer* (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2003).

⁶⁹ Standard histories of wallpaper only briefly discuss wallpapers of the twentieth century and only occasionally mention Bauhaus wallpaper, primarily due to the erroneous belief that modern architects only rejected wallpaper and did not use it. Sabine Thümmler, *Die Geschichte der Tapete: Raumkunst aus Papier: Aus den Beständen des Deutschen Tapetenmuseums Kassel* (Eurasburg: Minerva, 1998). Thümmler is the curator of the German Wallpaper Museum in Kassel and the leading authority on the history of German wallpaper. Other wallpaper literature includes Lesley Hoskins, ed., *The Papered Wall: The History, Patterns and Techniques of Wallpaper* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2005); and Françoise Teynac, *Wallpaper: A History* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982).

⁷⁰ This text includes valuable background and production information and the afterlife of the wallpaper. Burckhard Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete: Advertising and Success of a Brand Name* (Cologne: DuMont, 1995).

of the Roll: The Bauhaus Wallpapers” and Juliet Kinchin’s “Wallpaper Design” brought awareness to the wallpaper project and its mass market success.⁷¹ Wallpaper is often associated with large, complex, and busy floral patterns, perhaps those of Arts and Crafts designer William Morris or the figurative designs in 1950s American homes. Traditionally, it has been seen as decorative, therefore anti-modern, and not worthy of art historical considerations. The history of wallpaper has become a niche topic within the growing field of material culture studies, design history or the history of the decorative arts, starting in the late 1970s but increasing in the 1990s and 2000s. Several surveys and histories of wallpaper include short references to early twentieth century designs and the Bauhaus example.⁷² My dissertation will not treat the wallpaper as isolated from the rest of the wall painting workshop’s projects, but as a continuation of the interest and emphasis on the wall surface and the dedication to incorporating color into architecture.

These studies on the individual projects, like Scheper and Winkler, are so focused on the restorations and on the archival details of the wall painting workshop that they do not consider or use comparisons of wall paintings and similar projects beyond the Bauhaus. This dissertation discusses, for example, Le Corbusier’s wallpapers from the same years in comparison to the Bauhaus product. From the *Gesamtkunstwerk* to architectural theory on the role of the wall and the mediums and styles of wall paintings, a discussion of Bauhaus wall painting requires a familiarization with three different areas of focus: painting, architecture—specifically

⁷¹ Sabine Thümmler, “The Noble Simplicity of the Roll: The Bauhaus Wallpapers,” in *Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler, Peter Feierabend, and Ute Ackermann (Cologne: Könemann, 2000), 463–65; Juliet Kinchin, “Wallpaper Design,” in *Bauhaus, 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 292–95.

⁷² Hoskins, *The Papered Wall*; Teynac, *Wallpaper: A History*; Brenda Greysmith, *Wallpaper* (New York: Macmillan, 1976).

architectural polychromy—and the applied arts. Problems with the surviving sources, the deceptiveness of period photographs, and inaccurate restorations will also be considered.

The Bauhaus wall painting workshop is best analyzed chronologically; the developments and key moments of change in the wall painting workshop create distinct phases and frame each chapter of this dissertation. Chapter one investigates the disordered early wall painting workshop from 1919 to 1922, which yielded few wall paintings, none of which survived. Only a few descriptions and sketches remain. Even before the official opening of the school in fall 1919, the walls proved to be controversial when Gropius proposed a Bauhaus wall painting project to the city of Weimar. The few works produced in the first three years were eclectic and often expressionistic in style, and these will be compared to contemporary examples of wall paintings by non-Bauhaus architect Bruno Taut and non-Bauhaus works by Bauhaus student Karl Peter Röhl. Johannes Itten's and Oskar Schlemmer's teaching appointments in 1920 and 1921, respectively, lent some order to the workshop, as they shared a connection to Adolf Hölzel and the Stuttgart Art Academy, where wall painting was particularly important. Chapter one also explores the definitions of wall painting, decorative painting, and the term “painter-and-decorator.”

The different early masters of the workshop each added their own view and approach to wall painting. Chapter two focuses on Kandinsky's 1922 appointment as Master of Form, and the theoretical and practical approaches to wall painting at the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition. This exhibition was the first major public display of Bauhaus wall painting; the workshop came together to produce a large variety of works with many different techniques and strategies. There were divergent examples: some were like easel paintings—geometric and figurative compositions expanded onto the surface of the wall; others were wall color schemes that worked

within an architectural space. The important influence of the many Hungarians at the Bauhaus and in the wall painting workshop will also be discussed. I will draw upon Kandinsky's 1924 memo on the goals and direction of the wall painting workshop, in which he emphasized color and its power to enhance a building, or transform it.

Color's power and importance in architecture was the consistent emphasis of the workshop in the wake of Kandinsky's leadership, and chapter three will compare the wall painting theories and projects of the two most important wall painting students, Alfred Arndt and Hinnerk Scheper. With the maturation of the workshop in the years 1924 to 1926, it no longer produced murals or easel paintings in the wall, but focused on the study of color and the production of designs in which walls were painted in solid colors and planned in relationship to architecture. Projects like the 1924 Haus Auerbach, with wall paintings by Arndt, and the 1926 Bauhaus Dessau school building, with wall paintings organized by Scheper, will be the primary examples. Detailed discussions of these two wall painters' important projects and analyses of their theories prove that there was never one type of Bauhaus wall painting, but a plurality of approaches and techniques to applying color to the walls.

Chapter four concludes this dissertation with the final phase of the wall painting workshop, beginning with Hannes Meyer's directorship from 1928 to 1930, and centers on the Bauhaus wallpaper project. This project resulted in the school's most profitable partnership with industry. Wallpaper had been a stereotypically bourgeois and decorative product, but the Bauhaus version complicated common notions of wallpaper in modern architecture. The wallpaper was a huge success, in part, because walls were important even to the most humble consumer and the Bauhaus's industrial product made it cheap and easy to transform a space for a new future. This chapter will examine Meyer's approach to color in architecture; the student

wallpaper designs, such as Hermann Fischer's many samples; and the resulting advertisements and press materials developed at the Bauhaus. By the 1930 appointment of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as director, the wall painting students were subsumed into the interior decoration workshop. When the school closed in 1933, remarkably, the Bauhaus wallpaper brand survived and continued to be produced by Rasch wallpaper company through the Nazi period and beyond. Bauhaus wall painting evolved as the school did from craft-based expressionism to machine-made mass production and the workshop focused on the unification of color and architecture on the building's surface.

Chapter One

1919–1923: The Early Controversial Walls

In the summer of 1919, a few months before the Bauhaus officially opened its doors, Bauhaus founder and director Walter Gropius proposed the first commission for a Bauhaus wall painting. In a letter to the Weimar City Council, he suggested that instead of purchasing framed easel paintings for 600 reichsmarks, they should hire the new school to paint the walls of a room in the Weimar city hall or another municipal building.¹ The fee for the paintings would go directly to the new school. Without elaboration or explanation, the mayor of Weimar, Dr. Martin Donndorf wrote back that there were no rooms available for this painting.² Gropius, undeterred, insisted that the mayor bring the issue to the City Council. He explained further his idea of the Bauhaus painting an entire room, perhaps a porch or entry vestibule, and suggested that the school could organize a competition to select a group work designed specifically for that location. Gropius argued that this project would be a welcome cooperation between the city and the new school and create goodwill, which had already been lacking.³

The mayor reported back that he had presented the proposition to the city's Art and Building Committee, which rejected the project. Despite the fact that classes had not yet started; they thought the resulting work would not be suitable for a public space or for a mass

¹ Walter Gropius to Weimar City Council, June 5, 1919, Nr.10 Bl.2, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-07cc7750-4e6d-4d92-ade0-2c8231696f7c0.

² Mayor Dr. Donndorf to Walter Gropius, June 14, 1919, Nr.10 Bl.3, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-07cc7750-4e6d-4d92-ade0-2c8231696f7c0.

³ Walter Gropius to Mayor Dr. Donndorf, undated [c. June 1919], Nr.10 Bl.5, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-07cc7750-4e6d-4d92-ade0-2c8231696f7c0.

audience. They knew they did not like the new style of painting, i.e. Expressionism, which they had seen in two recent contemporary exhibitions in Weimar, and it was obvious to them that the Bauhaus would produce more of the same. The mayor suggested that perhaps in the future they would reevaluate this issue.⁴ For the conservative council, whatever the Bauhaus would create would be too experimental and radical, and the walls of the city hall were too public and too important for such experimentation.

The building committee thought they knew what a room painted by the Bauhaus would look like. Gropius had no such preconceived ideas; he did not specify a style in his proposal. Nobody, neither the students nor the teachers, in these first couple of years knew or could foresee how the Bauhaus would paint walls. The building committee, however, may have been prescient by mentioning the expressionistic leanings of many Weimar artists, for this was an early option. One of the prior exhibitions cited by the building committee was the controversial *Weimar Painting and Sculpture, Group II* show, which had been held at the Museum for Art and Crafts in March 1919.⁵ Organized by Wilhelm Köhler, this exhibition presented contemporary art from across the Weimar community, including works by Walther Klemm and Richard Engelmann, who were professors at the Weimar Academy of Fine Art and later briefly Bauhaus masters, along with their students. It also included works by artists in the circle of the Weimar painter

⁴ Mayor Dr. Donndorf to Walter Gropius, September 10, 1919, Nr.10 Bl.3, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-07cc7750-4e6d-4d92-ade0-2c8231696f7c0. The two exhibitions referenced by the building committee and subsequently by Gropius were from earlier in 1919 and in summer 1918. *Zum 100. Geburtstag S. K. H. Des Großherzogs Carl Alexander: Ausstellung von Werken Verstorbenen Maler Weimars Aus Dem Besitz Weimarischer Kunstfreunde Und Künstler* held in 1918 and *Gemälde und Skulpturen Weimarischer Künstler: Museum für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe Weimar am Karlsplatz 1*, held in 1919).

⁵ Wilhelm Köhler, *Gemälde und Skulpturen Weimarischer Künstler: Museum für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe Weimar am Karlsplatz 2* (Weimar, 1919).

Johannes Molzahn, such as future Bauhäusler Karl Peter Röhl.⁶

Molzahn and his circle, were the most radical and expressionistic of the predominantly conservative Weimar art community. Molzahn was a member of the Sturm gallery circle in Berlin and one of the many artists supported by Herwarth Walden. Molzahn's brand of German expressionism was particularly cosmic, mystical, and politically radical. In "The Manifesto of Absolute Expressionism" published in the October 1919 edition of the art journal *Der Sturm* Molzahn declared in the pulsating and energetic text:

The work—to whom we—as painters—sculptures and poets—are bound—is the immense energy of such events—it is cosmic will—ardor of ETERNITY.—
Living arrow—aimed at all of you.—It should penetrate you—make your blood glow,—so that it may flow livelier and more quickly—glow more brightly into ETERNITY.⁷

Completed one month after the Weimar exhibition, in April 1919, Molzahn's *Der Idee-Bewegung-Kampf (Ideas, Motion, and Struggle)* (figure 1.1) was dedicated to Karl Liebknecht, the communist leader who was murdered along with Rosa Luxemburg in January 1919.⁸ This painting provides a good example of his passionate, revolutionary, and nearly abstract works, which depicted dramatic political and celestial events with swirling, diagonal lines and pulsating forms. Molzahn's prominence in the Weimar art scene and his support for Gropius allied him with the expressionist painters appointed at the nascent school, although he was never officially a

⁶ Constanze Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne: Auf der Suche nach dem "Neuen Menschen"; Zwischen Nachkriegsexpressionismus, Frühem Bauhaus und Internationalem Konstruktivismus* (Petersberg: Imhof, 2007), 69.

⁷ Johannes Molzahn, "The Manifesto of Absolute Expressionism," in *Der Sturm*, (1919) in *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. Rose-Carol Washton Long, trans. ed. Nancy Roth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 105.

⁸ Ernst Scheyer, "Molzahn, Muche, and the Weimar Bauhaus," *Art Journal* 28, no. 3 (April 1, 1969): 269–77.

member of the Bauhaus.⁹ The local press, outraged by this type of expressionism, labeled these artists radical, and right wing German Nationalists called them “Art Spartacists.”¹⁰ Similarly, a friend of Molzahn and a future Bauhaus student, the expressionist paintings of Karl Peter Röhl were criticized as “inextricably colored mischief” in the *Weimarische Landeszeitung Deutschland*.¹¹ The Weimar building committee was openly wary of controversial contemporary art and its potential manifestation in wall paintings. In a September 18, 1919, letter, Gropius clarified his intent that the building committee would make the final decision for the commissioned work, arguing that the Bauhaus was not artistically or politically radical, as he did many times throughout his tenure at the school. The Bauhaus was founded after the aforementioned exhibitions and it had no predetermined specific artistic style.¹² In the end, Gropius’ argument failed and the Bauhaus students never painted any rooms in the city hall.

This very early episode in the school’s history reveals the centrality of wall painting at the Weimar Bauhaus, as it also foreshadowed the contentious and fragile position of the new school in conservative Weimar. Gropius was drawn to the potential of wall painting commissions to provide income to aid the school’s tenuous financial situation. While commissions and outside work were possible and forthcoming, wall painters such as Oskar Schlemmer quickly learned that wall paintings often triggered judgmental reactions. The first three years of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop, from 1919 to 1922, was a period of confusion and change. The goals of the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ The Spartacists was the name of a branch of the German Communist Party led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

¹¹ “Unentwirrbarer Farbenunfug.” “Drei eingesandt gegen die modernste Kunst,” *Weimarische Landeszeitung Deutschland* 89 (March 29, 1930), quoted in Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne*, 71.

¹² Walter Gropius to Weimar City Council, September 18, 1919, Nr.10 Bl.15, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn: nbn: de: urmel-07cc7750-4e6d-4d92-ade0-2c8231696f7c0.

workshop were not clear. The role of wall painting in relation to architecture, was not clearly defined, there was no unified style, no clear conceptualization of terminology, and no clear leadership. Additionally, the workshop was further destabilized as its projects provoked strong reactions from the student body, the masters, and the outside community.

This chapter focuses on the projects during this early period, leading up to the critical 1923 exhibition, when only few wall paintings were completed and at a time when the workshop's goals were amorphous and vague. Descriptions and a few black-and-white photographs leave little evidence for reimagining and examining these early projects. Throughout this chapter, these descriptions will be analyzed and compared to known and extant works in order to understand and reimagine their aesthetic and conceptual strategies. In addition, in order to determine what was meant by wall painting or wall decoration in 1919, precedents for Bauhaus wall painting, such as the decorated walls of the forefathers of the Bauhaus, Belgian architect and designer Henry van de Velde and Stuttgart painter Adolf Hölzel provide context. The issue of the role of paint and color in architecture began to emerge in the early Bauhaus wall paintings, and the wall was revealed as a critical and controversial site, initiating and anticipating the later developments and philosophies of the wall painting workshop.

Decorative Painting or Wall Painting?

The wall painting workshop's German title in the Bauhaus founding documents accounts for part of its confusing, inconsistent, and controversial beginning. Although these documents have been translated into English, a more nuanced interpretation of the German words used for wall painting needs to be considered. The Bauhaus Manifesto, published in April 1919, explicitly

stated “to embellish buildings was once the noblest function of the fine arts.”¹³ Accordingly, painting and sculpture, and all other crafts decorated the building, for example a great cathedral. The next two pages of the leaflet included a more thorough description: in the new building, *Malerei* (painting) and the *Maler* (painter) would unify with *Bildhauerei* (sculpture) *Kunstgewerbe* (handicraft) and *Handwerk* and (crafts). In the outline of the craft training, the fourth workshop described included *Dekorationsmaler*, *Glasmaler* (glass painter) *Mosaiker* (mosaic artist) *Emallöre* (enameller) in the original German.¹⁴ The English version of Hans Wingler’s text translated this first term, *Dekorationsmaler*, as “painter-and-decorator.”¹⁵ However, “painter-and-decorator” is a rather vague term not commonly used in English. The German word could also translate to “interior decorator” or “scene painter,” as in the theater, but neither of these helps to identify what this term really means.¹⁶ The other disciplines of the fourth workshop, “glass painter, mosaic worker, enamellers,” imply that this workshop was focused on surface ornamentation and the decoration of the wall surfaces of the new great building. These terms suggest that the Bauhaus would bring the painter back to the role of decorator. As Nancy Troy has discussed, in France contemporaneous debates emerged about decorative painting and role of the artist and decorator in the decorative arts.¹⁷

¹³ Walter Gropius, “Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar (1919),” in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 31.

¹⁴ Walter Gropius, “Programm des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar, April 1919,” in *Das Bauhaus 1919–1933: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin und Chicago*, ed. Hans Wingler (Bramsche: Rasch, 1962), 41.

¹⁵ Gropius, “Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar,” 32.

¹⁶ Airlie and Littlejohn, *Collins German Dictionary*, 1255; Oxford Dictionaries, “Dekorationsmaler. Oxford-Duden German Dictionary. Oxford Language Dictionaries Online.,” <http://oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com/view/EntryPage.html?sp=/oldo/b-de-en/csec5149>.

¹⁷ Nancy Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). Nancy Troy also has discussed the French *décorateur* (decorator) and the professionalism, education and authorship of the artist-decorator. The debates

Further in the program Gropius listed the types of drawing and painting instruction, from live models to landscape. He was more specific about the types of training and the role of the “painter-and-decorator” in this new unified building, and his fifth category was the *Ausführen von Wandbildern, Tafelbildern und Bilderschreinen* (execution of murals, panel pictures, and religious shrines).¹⁸ Also listed are other types of drawing and painting instruction, *Entwerfen von Ornamenten* (design of ornament) and *Entwerfen von Aussen-, Garten-, und Innenarchitekturen* (design of exteriors, gardens and interiors). The “painter-and-decorator” would theoretically be involved in these many different types of painting and surface ornament, although these descriptions, too, are vague and undefined. Gropius offered more clarification in his “Address to the Students” presented in July 1919. “To begin with, a practical workshop outfitted for sculptors will be ready in the fall and, for painters, hopefully an apprentice course with a painter-and-decorator.”¹⁹ Throughout the first year, the workshop was identified as the *Dekorationsmalerkursus* (painter-and-decorator course),²⁰ which applied *Dekorationsmalerei* (decorative painting).²¹

A year later, in fall 1920, however, the term “painter-and-decorator” was no longer in use and the workshop was no longer described as decorative painting. Instead, in the Masters

about the decorative arts in France around 1900 also related to the rivalry between the French and German industry. In addition, Troy discussed the *constructeurs* and *coloriste* design groups in the years before World War I and their differing approaches and style, and relationship between the arts and the resulting developments through the 1925 Decorative Arts Exposition in Paris.

¹⁸ Gropius, “Programm des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar,” 41.

¹⁹ “Im Herbst wird zunächst für die Bildhauer ein praktischer Betrieb fertig eingerichtet sein, für die Maler hoffentlich ein Lehrkursus beim Dekorationsmaler.” Walter Gropius, “Ansprache an die Studierenden des Staatlichen Bauhauses, gehalten aus Anlaß der Jahresausstellung von Schülerarbeiten im Juli 1919,” in *Das Bauhaus, 1919-1933: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin.*, ed. Hans Wingler (Bramsche: Gebr. Rasch, 1962), 45.

²⁰ “Sitzung des Meisterrates am 5. Oktober 1919,” in *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar, 1919 bis 1925*, ed. Volker Wahl (Weimar: Böhlau, 2001), 47.

²¹ “Sitzung des Meisterrates am 14. Mai 1920,” in *Ibid.*, 85.

Council meeting it was called the workshop for *Wandmalerei* (wall painting).²² By 1921 the terminology had officially changed as the curriculum of the school was refined and modified. The pamphlet “The Statutes of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar,” now described the fourth workshop as *Wandmaler, Tafelbildmaler, Glasmaler, Mosaiker* (wall painter, panel painter, glass painter, mosaic worker).²³ The “painter-and-decorator” was replaced by “wall painter.” The 1921 curriculum also no longer listed the design of ornament and the design of interiors in the type of instruction. This shift in terminology is not inconsequential or merely semantic. The new masters of the workshop continually redefined wall painting in these first few years.

It is no surprise that the terms “decorative” and “ornament” were removed from the workshop’s description. After Adolf Loos’s infamous essay “Ornament and Crime,” usually dated to 1908, the terms “ornament” and “decoration” were increasingly being erased from the discourse of modern architecture and design, and the decoration of architecture became a remnant of the nineteenth century.²⁴ As Alina Payne argued, in architecture and architectural theory in the early decades of the twentieth century there was a shift from an interest and focus on ornament and decoration in the nineteenth century to a focus, perhaps obsession, with the

²² “Masters Council Meeting,” minutes, September 20, 1919, Nr.12, Bl.58, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-28cba5de-3067-4ac6-a04d-633c676c5b503.

²³ “Die Satzungen des Staatlichen Bauhauses zu Weimar, Januar 1921,” in Wingler, *Das Bauhaus, 1919-1933: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin*. (Bramsche: Rasch, 1962), 53–56.

²⁴ The essay although dated to 1908, was first presented as a lecture in 1910 to the Akademischer Verband für Literature und Musik, and first published in French in *Cahiers d’aujourd’hui* in June 1913. For further explanation of the complex publication of this text see Alina Alexandra Payne, *From Ornament to Object: Genealogies of Architectural Modernism*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 269; Adolf Opel, Introduction to *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays* by Adolf Loos (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1998), 7–17; and Burkhardt Rukschcio, “Ornament und Mythos,” in *Ornament und Askese: Im Zeitgeist des Wien der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Alfred Pfabigan (Vienna: Christian Brandstätter, 1985), 57–68.

object, cleansed of ornament, in the twentieth.²⁵ Loos' text, which equated decoration with degeneration but was also related to social and economic concerns, was not published in German until 1929 in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, but it was presented as a lecture on a number of occasions in Vienna, was published in French in 1913, and excerpts were published in many German art journals. By 1920 Loos' inflammatory language had permeated a large audience of architects and artists.²⁶ The ideas spread further when Le Corbusier published Loos' text in his journal *L'Esprit Nouveau* in 1920 and in 1924 the Deutsche Werkbund's catalogue *Die Form ohne Ornament* (Form without Ornament) continued the battle cry.²⁷ Loos was read at the Bauhaus, at least through Le Corbusier's journal, to which the Bauhaus subscribed.²⁸ On May 11, 1922, Schlemmer discussed Loos in his diary.²⁹ By this point, Gropius and the Masters Council's use of decorative and ornament would have seemed more and more outmoded and retrograde. The new Bauhaus workshop for wall painting would not be bound to a nineteenth century conception of decoration and ornament by using the term "painter-and-decorator," but rather needed to establish a new model of wall painting and different kind of painting in and on architecture.

In fall 1919, the workshop was established as one of the first three at the new school. In the post-war period of scarcity, the wall painting, book-binding, and weaving workshops were

²⁵ Alina Alexandra Payne, *From Ornament to Object*, 3–24.

²⁶ Loos declared, "A person of our time who gives way to the urge to daub the walls with erotic symbols is a criminal or degenerate." Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime" (1929), in *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays*, ed. Adolf Opel, trans. Michael Mitchell (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1998), 167.

²⁷ Wolfgang Pfeleiderer, *Die Form ohne Ornament: Werkbundaussstellung 1924* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1924).

²⁸ Karl Schawelka, "Fragen eines lesenden Bauhausgesellen—Notizen zu den erhaltenen Buchbeständen des 'Staatlichen Bauhauses' Weimar," in *Die Bauhaus-Bibliothek Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, ed. Michael Siebenbrodt and Frank Simon-Ritz (Weimar: Verlag der Bauhaus-Universität, 2009), 28, 42.

²⁹ Diary, May 11, 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, ed. Tut Schlemmer, trans. Krishna Winston (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), 121.

fairly simple to equip and staff. The weaving and book binding materials and machinery were owned and made available to the Bauhaus by the newly hired masters of the workshops, Helene Börner and Otto Dorfner, respectively.³⁰ The wall painting workshop did not need specialty equipment and had a staff available to teach in it. More important, the integration of painting and architecture was a founding ideal of the school, and for this reason a wall painting workshop was essential.

Gropius had a special appreciation for painters when he began hiring teachers for the new school. Rose-Carol Washton Long emphasized that the painters at the early Bauhaus, like Johannes Itten and Lyonel Feininger, shared Gropius' visionary beliefs, and therefore it is no surprise that they formed the core of the Weimar faculty.³¹ Painting in early twentieth century Germany was the most experimental and progressive art form, so it needed to be offered at the Bauhaus. The school was formed as a unification of the Grand Ducal Arts and Craft School, founded by Henry van de Velde, and the traditional Weimar Fine Arts Academy. Gropius inherited students from these two institutions, many of whom studied painting, such as Maria Rasch, sister of Emil Rasch, the wallpaper company owner and later collaborator on the Bauhaus wallpaper project.³² While some students from these institutions shifted their interests to different craft workshops when they enrolled at the Bauhaus, others, like Rasch, were dedicated

³⁰ Franciscono, *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar*, 159–60.

³¹ Rose-Carol Washton Long, "From Metaphysics to Material Culture: Painting and Photography at the Bauhaus," in *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War*, ed. Kathleen James-Chakraborty (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 43–62.

³² Walter Borchers, *Maria Rasch: Eine Osnabrücker Malerin, 1897–1959* (Osnabrück: Städtisches Museum, 1965).

to painting.³³ Painting however, could no longer be “salon art,” which Gropius denounced in his manifesto,³⁴ now painting had to be in collaboration with architecture.

Bauhaus literature has commonly discussed the painters: Itten, Schlemmer, Feininger, Kandinsky, Paul Klee, and others and their easel paintings. It has rarely emphasized however, the importance of painting on the wall, the integration of painting in architecture. Wall painting during the early years of the school, was mentioned only briefly in Hans Wingler’s comprehensive and important history *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*.³⁵ He included a brief summary of the early history of the workshop and list of projects. In Magdalena Droste’s more recent seminal history of the Bauhaus, the early wall painting workshop is only considered briefly.³⁶ She did not mention wall painting as one of earliest established workshops, and it was first discussed in the context of the reorganization of the school in 1922 after the controversy concerning Itten.³⁷ Droste explained that, like the sculpture workshop, the wall painting workshop could not organize itself for useful production, which to her and for Wingler, seemed to be the most important factor for a workshop’s success. To these authors, without an industrial product, the early workshop failed.³⁸

Both of these authors glorified the later iconic Dessau Bauhaus over the early expressionist period in Weimar because they were chronicling the general history of the school. They also did not adequately situate painting, and the translation of painting into architecture as founding principles of the school. In the 1980s, Rainer Wick more directly addressed these issues

³³ Rasch enrolled in the wall painting workshop where she became life-long friends with Hinnerk Scheper and Lou Berkenkamp-Scheper.

³⁴ Gropius, “Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar.”

³⁵ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*.

³⁶ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

in his articles on architecture and color at the Bauhaus. He highlighted the problem of the early workshop's hypothetical connection to a non-existent architecture department: without a functioning architecture department—walls to paint on—the whole establishment of the workshop seemed premature.³⁹ Wick's more critical examination of the workshop is useful, but he did not explore why the workshop existed without an architecture department, or the importance of paintings and painters to the school as a whole.

Wick, like other short essays about the early wall painting workshop, listed many of the projects and the leaders, and included some descriptions of the lost works. The catalogue of 1988 Bauhaus Archiv exhibition *Experiment Bauhaus* included a detailed and well-researched essay on the workshop by Christian Wolsdorff.⁴⁰ Along with the catalogue essay "Wandgestaltung," by Wulf Herzogenrath in the 1988 catalogue *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier*,⁴¹ Wolsdorff's text is an important contribution to the scholarship on the early years. A decade earlier Herzogenrath wrote extensively about Oskar Schlemmer's wall paintings, and this study is useful for understanding the early workshop, but also limited, as Schlemmer was only a factor in the wall painting workshop for a short period.⁴²

Herzogenrath also included a valuable discussion of Schlemmer's pre-Bauhaus wall paintings and his teacher Adolf Hölzel in Stuttgart. Later, Marco Pogacnik discussed the significant influence of the Stuttgart avant-garde on the workshop in more depth in his 2009

³⁹ Rainer Wick, "Farbe und Architektur," *Kunstforum International* 57 (1983): 25–35; Rainer Wick, "Bauhausarchitektur und Farbe," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar* 5/6 (1983): 483–87.

⁴⁰ Christian Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Experiment Bauhaus: Das Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin (West) zu Gast im Bauhaus Dessau*, ed. Peter Hahn, Magdalena Droste, and Jeannine Fiedler (Berlin: Kupfergraben Verlagsgesellschaft, 1988), 282–85.

⁴¹ Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung," in *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1988), 169–88.

⁴² Wulf Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer: Die Wandgestaltung der neuen Architektur* (Munich: Prestel, 1973).

essay “Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei.”⁴³ Generally these German language sources are obscure and hard to find, and many predate the restorations and reconstructions of Bauhaus wall paintings sites since 1994, diminishing their accuracy and relevance.

Renate Scheper’s critical catalogue for the 2005 Bauhaus Archiv exhibition *Colourful! The Wallpainting Workshop at the Bauhaus* was the first text dedicated entirely to the workshop, it provided a thoroughly researched description of the early years.⁴⁴ Scheper, however, focused on her father-in-law, Hinnerk Scheper, and his development in this early period. Furthermore, she did not discuss the terminology of wall painting, precedents to the Bauhaus, or the importance of painting to the school, and failed to include any comparisons with other contemporary European wall paintings. The recent *Bauhaus Alben 3: The Weaving Workshop, The Wall-Painting Workshop, The Glass-Painting Workshop, The Bookbinding Workshop, The Stone-Carving Workshop*, published in 2008, provided a collection of photographs of early Bauhaus projects, and Klaus-Jürgen Winkler’s essay on the wall painting workshop is the most detailed and well-researched analysis to date of these early years.⁴⁵ Winkler and his team of student researchers concentrated on recently found photographs and archival records, and their carefully documented contribution brought the wall painting workshop in Weimar into clear focus. None of these texts however, looked beyond and outside the Bauhaus, to the recent past, in order to understand the motivations and experimentations of the first four years of the

⁴³ Marco Pogacnik, “Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei,” in *Kaleidoskop: Hoelzel in der Avantgarde*, ed. Marion Ackermann, Gerhard Leistner, and Daniel Spanke (Heidelberg: Kehrer, 2009), 100–8.

⁴⁴ Renate Scheper, *Colourful! The Wallpainting Workshop at the Bauhaus* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2005).

⁴⁵ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” In *Bauhaus Alben 3: The Weaving Workshop, The Wall-Painting Workshop, The Glass-Painting Workshop, The Bookbinding Workshop, The Stone-Carving Workshop*, ed. Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, trans. Steven Lindberg (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2008), 120-49.

workshop, or to reimagine the lost wall paintings. Rather, most focus on the well-documented examples from the 1923 exhibition, the reconstructions of which, however, were created years after the workshop was first established.

Pre-History of the Workshop

Increasingly and correctly, the Bauhaus's founding in 1919 has been understood in the literature as a continuation of many pre-war developments. John Maciuika has shown that the school was not isolated or unique, but was a product of widespread art school reform in Germany that began in the late nineteenth century with the legacy of the founding of the Deutsche Werkbund. Pre-war figures like Herman Muthesius, Henry van de Velde, and Peter Behrens, played key roles in the development of the ideas that shaped key post-war figures like Gropius and Bruno Taut.⁴⁶ Therefore I must ask: What types of wall painting, decorative painting and wall treatments were used and created by those who preceded the Bauhaus and how did these influence the nascent workshop? Was there a precedent for a “painter-and-decorator”?

Adolf Behne, a contemporary architectural critic and friend of Bruno Taut and Gropius, discussed the importance of walls in his 1918 article “Die Überwindung des Tektonischen in der russischen Baukunst.” He wrote, “The carrier of life and experience in architecture is the wall, and not space; for space cannot be grasped by the senses.”⁴⁷ Those within Gropius's circle, his friends in the Arbeitsrat, were certainly focused on the treatment of walls, on the wall surface, and on the unification of the arts. Gropius was associated with a number of designers who might

⁴⁶ John V. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics, and the German State, 1890–1920* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Maciuika argued that the Bauhaus was just the best known example of a larger change in applied art institutions follow a period of great reform during Wilhelmine Germany

⁴⁷ Adolf Behne, “Die Überwindung des Tektonischen in der russischen Baukunst,” *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, no. 24 (September 3, 1918): 836, quoted in Franciscono, *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar*, 108.

fit the description of a “painter-and-decorator.” He may have had in mind van de Velde and Behrens, two giants of the earlier generation who had worked in many media—architecture, painting, the design of everyday objects, wallpaper, and wall paintings. Van de Velde’s presence lingered in Weimar. He founded the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts in 1902, one of the two schools that united to form the Bauhaus in 1919, and he was a direct influence on the ideas and makeup of the early Bauhaus as well as the early wall painting workshop. As Kathleen James-Chakraborty argued, although Gropius later attempted to distance himself from van de Velde, he learned a great deal from van de Velde’s previous example.⁴⁸ Immediately before World War I, Gropius and van de Velde were allied on the side of artistic individuality, against Herman Muthesius’s advocacy of types in the famous debate at the 1914 Werkbund Exhibition in Cologne.⁴⁹ Perhaps owing to this strategic alliance, Gropius was recommended by van de Velde, along with August Endel and Hermann Obrist, to succeed him as director of the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts. The political and financial difficulties van de Velde faced and eventually failed to navigate successfully for his own school provided Gropius with a great motivating lesson.⁵⁰

In many ways van de Velde was a preeminent “painter-and-decorator” turned architect in the years leading up to World War I. Gropius, the wall painting workshops, and the entire early

⁴⁸ Kathleen James-Chakraborty, “Henry Van de Velde and Walter Gropius: Between Avoidance and Imitation,” in *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 26–42.

⁴⁹ Katherine M Kuenzli, “Architecture, Individualism, and Nation: Henry van de Velde’s 1914 Werkbund Theater Building,” *Art Bulletin* 94, no. 2 (2012): 251–73; Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture Before the First World War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978).

⁵⁰ James-Chakraborty, “Henry Van de Velde and Walter Gropius.” Gropius did not want to be forgotten and marginalized in histories of modern architecture and design as Van de Velde had been. Gropius was ultimately successful by sustaining the school’s existence and establishing its long lasting and significant reputation.

Bauhaus worked in the shadow of van de Velde, not only in the organization and pedagogical theory, but also in the physical buildings that housed the Weimar Bauhaus, which van de Velde had designed and built a decade earlier. The wall paintings created in the early years of the workshop were quite literally painted on van de Velde's walls.

Henry van de Velde, born in Antwerp in 1863, studied painting in Paris, and by 1893 had given up painting in order to create decorative arts and architecture for broader public consumption. Van de Velde worked within in the emerging Art Nouveau style, or *Jugendstil*, and he was well known for his furniture, all types of objects and decoration, from candlestick holders to jewelry and wallpapers, and (eventually) buildings. He endeavored, as did many Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts artists and designers, to create the total work, *gesamtwerk*, and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or the total work of art. In some early interior design projects, for example for the Havana Company sales room in Berlin from 1899, van de Velde designed every element of the room, including the wall decoration (figure 1.2). On the top of walls between the wall shelving and the ceiling, he included a frieze of curving and zigzag elements, a flat abstracted pattern, repeating the lines and whiplashes used in the other furniture and architectural features. The lines of the frieze play a formal role in the space by unifying the different heights of the arches and shelves but, in addition, these curving, wisping lines mimic wafting smoke of cigars—the product being sold.⁵¹

Van de Velde moved to Weimar in 1902 and after much debate, negotiation, and an earlier Arts and Crafts seminar, he opened his school of arts and crafts on October 7, 1907.⁵² The

⁵¹ Klaus-Jürgen Sembach, *Henry Van De Velde* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 56.

⁵² The school was officially established by the Grand Duke Wilhem-Ernst of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach six months later on April 1, 1908. Volker Wahl, "Henry van de Veldes Kunstgewerbeschule in Weimar von 1908 bis 1915: Gründung, Aufgaben und Wirkungen," in *Van de Veldes Kunstgewerbeschule in Weimar: Geschichte und Instandsetzung*, ed. Heidemarie

training, much like the later Bauhaus, was based in craft workshops: goldsmithing and enamel work, bookbinding, weaving and embroidery, carpet tying, ceramics, and metal work. Yet there were no wall painting, wall decoration or wallpaper workshops.⁵³ The subject of walls and their decoration was included in classes on interior design or ornament and the *Ornamentlehre*, (ornament instruction course).⁵⁴ Arthur Schmidt, a draughtsman and interior designer in van de Velde's private office, led the instruction and students designed interior spaces, wall decoration and painting. In an interior designed by student Hans Kramer the walls were divided between a dark lower wainscoting and an upper, white or a light-colored wall (figure 1.3). An ornamental strip of decorative painting applied directly to the light wall above the wainscoting coordinated with the rest of the furnishings in a curving organic Art Nouveau style. The interior had been integrated and unified into a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The student lessons were modeled on van de Velde's theories of linear ornament, which had been explained in his essays published in German periodicals, including *Innen Dekoration*, and in a number of books. His (undated) *Manuscript on Ornament*, an unpublished essay, chronicled his history and theory of linear ornament and synthesized many of the ideas he was using and developing during his time in Weimar.⁵⁵ He believed that the curving and undulating

Schirmer (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität Weimar Verlag, 2011), 33–49; Karl-Heinz Hüter, “Hoffnung, Illusion und Enttäuschung: Henry van de Velde Kunstgewerbeschule und das Frühe Bauhaus,” in *Henry Van De Velde: Ein Europäischer Künstler Seiner Zeit* (Cologne: Wienand, 1992), 285–337.

⁵³ Hüter, “Hoffnung, Illusion und Enttäuschung”; Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar.”

⁵⁴ In the first year van de Velde himself taught this course, and its ideas and philosophies were at the core of his artistic program. Dora Wibiral continued this instruction in later years. Hüter, “Hoffnung, Illusion und Enttäuschung.”

⁵⁵ Elie G. Haddad, “Henry van de Velde on Rational Beauty, Empathy and Ornament: A Chapter in the Aesthetics of Architectural Modernity” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1998); Elie G. Haddad, “On Henry Van de Velde's Manuscript on Ornament,” *Journal of Design History* 16 (2003): 119–38.

surface of ancient cave walls inspired the creation of the line. The line then developed into linear ornament. He wrote:

These forces summoned to the surface are moving and generous: 1) moving, because they testify to a victory conjured up from the mysterious depths of the surface, by the magic of a primordial gesture, all the elements of an ornament, whose equilibrium and harmony had been set from the earliest times; 2) generous, because they invited us all and at every moment to participate in their games and in the intoxication that they bring.⁵⁶

One can see this play of forces in the Havana Company sales room. The curving pattern creates an interest on the surface, capturing the spectator and evoking the primordial ornament on the cave walls.

Despite the importance of linear ornament to his theory, van de Velde did not use much surface ornament in the two art school buildings in Weimar, his first public commissions (figures 1.4–1.5).⁵⁷ These two buildings, which housed three different institutions, were designed to relate to each other, the main art school building looming over the smaller workshop building, and all integral to the overall aesthetic.⁵⁸ The main building's most distinctive features are the windows of the studio spaces on the top floor. The large windows curve up and over the edge of the roof, providing these rooms with tremendous natural light and evoking the large glass curtain walls that later modern architects, like Gropius, would exploit. The workshop building's gable end, with a rounded horseshoe arch, face the main school building and exemplify the subtle Art

⁵⁶ Henry Van de Velde, "Manuscript on Ornament (n.d.)," trans. Elie G. Haddad and Rosemary Anderson, *Journal of Design History* 16 (2003): 160.

⁵⁷ They were built in three stages from 1904 to 1911. The main building housed the traditional and conservative Grand Ducal Art Academy, its east wing was complete in 1904 and the west wing in 1911. The workshop building, located across a small courtyard from the main building, was the home of the Grand Ducal School of Sculpture and van de Velde's own Arts and Craft School. This building was constructed from 1905 to 1911. Karl Schawelka, "The Henry van de Velde Art School Buildings in Weimar as an Ensemble," in *Henry van de Velde's Art School Buildings in Weimar: Architecture and Interiors*, ed. Silke Opitz (Weimar: Bauhaus University Press, 2009).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Nouveau curve that was used throughout both buildings. Overall, the buildings are restrained, but throughout, in the curving archways of the doors, in the slight whiplash of the railings on the curving stairs, and even down to the shape of the door handles, the buildings are a stylized, organic, sculptural whole.⁵⁹ There was no evidence of murals in van de Velde's buildings during his tenure. The walls were generally beige, creating a stark contrast between the light walls and dark wood molding of doorways and staircases (figure 1.6). Later, the wall paintings of the Bauhaus would also inhabit this Art Nouveau architecture.

While van de Velde's interest in wall surfaces and ornament was perhaps one model of a "painter-and-decorator," another potential inspiration may have been Gropius's contemporary and leader of the Arbeitsrat für Kunst member, Bruno Taut. Taut, along with other members of the Arbeitsrat, like Adolf Behne, were very important friends of and influences on Gropius and the founding of the Bauhaus.⁶⁰ The ideas of the Bauhaus' founding manifesto were related to and in some sense in dialogue with those of the Arbeitsrat group and other contemporaries. From 1914 to 1919, Taut and Behne both developed theories of wall treatments and wrote about the integration of painting into a new total architecture. In 1914, Taut published the article "A Necessity" in *Der Sturm*, calling for a new synthetic architecture, which would be a union of sculpture, painting and architecture.⁶¹ He used the Gothic cathedral as the prime example, just as Feininger would in the 1919 cover for the Bauhaus Manifesto. For Taut the building, "in which everything—painting and sculpture—all together will form great architecture and wherein architecture once again merges with the other arts," and will be similar to the new art, with

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Franciscono, *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar*, 127–52.

⁶¹ Bruno Taut, "A Necessity" in *Der Sturm* (1914), in *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. Rose-Carol Washton Long, trans. Rosemarie Haag Bletter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 123–6.

windows like a Delaunay painting, and “on the wall cubistic rhythms—the paintings of Franz Marc and the art of Kandinsky.”⁶² Taut used paint and color extensively in his architecture, for example in his prewar Falkenberg Garden City housing estate. He realized a version of his *Gesamtkunstwerk* at the 1914 Werkbund exhibition in his Glass House. Rosemarie Haag Bletter has described Taut’s house as “gem like.”⁶³ Colored and silver glass formed the ceiling, and stained glass works by expressionist painters, for example Max Pechstein, formed the walls of the fountain room on the entrance level of the small building.⁶⁴ The wall treatments, which used glass of different colors and translucencies, were critical to the creation of the spiritual experience of the building. While Taut’s use of glass is usually the main focus of this building and other expressionist architecture, it should be remembered that Taut used glass as walls and it is therefore the walls that are made from the important, meaningful, even spiritual material.

The “painter-and-decorator” that Gropius prescribed, however, could very well have been a new type, an artist/craftsman along the lines of the new Bauhaus student. The Bauhaus was producing an entirely new model of a designer, someone conversant in the formal and theoretical advancements of the fine arts, but also fluent in the craft and technical side of production. At this point there were not yet teachers that could teach both sides of the instruction and in the early phase of the school the workshops needed both a Master of Form and a Master of Craft. But the students produced by means of this type of training would be both artists *and* craftspeople. Later

⁶² Ibid., 126.

⁶³ Rosemarie Haag Bletter, “The Interpretation of the Glass Dream: Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 40, no. 1 (March 1, 1981): 20–43. She identified the recurring crystal metaphor, the meanings of glass, and the influence of Expressionist Paul Scheerbart in her important article.

⁶⁴ Rosemarie Haag Bletter, *Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart’s Vision: Utopian Aspects of German Expressionist Architecture* (New York: PhD diss., Columbia University, 1973), 73. Johan Thorn-Prikker, Fritz Becker, and Imanuel Margold also contributed glass paintings.

Master of the wall painting workshop, Hinnerk Scheper, was a product of this instruction, one of the students turned “Young Masters” of the Dessau Bauhaus.

Outside of a specific “painter-and-decorator,” the role of painting in relation to architecture at the Bauhaus was problematic. As an architect, Gropius had prior experience integrating painting and sculpture into his architecture, specifically at the 1914 Werkbund Exhibition, where Taut created his Glass Pavilion, and Henry van de Velde built his Werkbund Theater. In the Machine Hall, Gropius integrated the works of a number of artists, sculptors and painters. Although not much is known about Gropius’s working relationship with these artists, a few surviving photographs of paintings by Georg Kolbe and Erwin Hass in the vestibule exist (figure 1.7). Swirling and zigzag shapes with figures interspersed and emerging from the designs covered the walls and ceilings of this space. As Karin Wilhelm has discussed, the wall paintings were dedicated to the theme of industrial architecture.⁶⁵ This example of Gropius’s pre-Bauhaus architecture proves that he had an interest in the integration of painting and architecture, as does his friendship with Taut and Behne, and the influence of van de Velde. However even with these examples the Bauhaus wall painting workshop had unstable footing when it was founded in 1919, and no clear model for the “painter-and-decorator” emerged in the post-war years.

A Playground of Lively Ornaments

When the so-called “decorative painting” workshop at the Bauhaus first opened in October 1919, a local court painter and decorator, Franz Heidelmann, conducted a daily, hour-

⁶⁵ Karin Wilhelm, “Die ‘Musterfabrik’ Büro-und Fabrikgebäude von Walter Gropius,” in *Der Westdeutsche Impuls 1900-1914: Kunst und Umweltgestaltung im Industriegebiet. Die Deutsche Werkbund-Ausstellung, Cöln 1914*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath (Cologne: Kölnischer Kunstverein, 1984), 143–54.

long lecture and became a temporary master to the early workshop.⁶⁶ Little is known about him or his work except that he was knowledgeable about pigments, binders, and other technical aspects of painting.⁶⁷ Heidelmann taught primarily a traditional panel-painting course along the lines of the old academy.⁶⁸ The workshop, however needed a master who was able to teach both the technical side of painting as well as the artistic side, a Master of Form *and* Craft, and it is clear from the start that Heidelmann was never going to be that sort of instructor. By May 1920, Heidelmann had expressed his desire to leave the Bauhaus, and although Gropius tried to persuade him to stay on in some capacity, he was unable to convince him to stay and over the next two years the workshop's leadership was constantly changing.⁶⁹

In spring 1920, the decorative painting students were reportedly in high spirits, despite the lack of a steady master (figure 1.8). For the 1920 summer semester, three students—Franz Johannes Skala, Karl Peter Röhl, and Hinnerk Scheper—were given management roles under the temporary supervision of Heidelmann due to the temporary master's imminent departure and the absence of a true replacement.⁷⁰ In response to this leadership problem, Gropius advised the Masters Council to promote Skala to head the workshop. Skala had the technical knowledge and the artistic talent to run the workshop, but it seems that he could not acquire teaching credentials

⁶⁶ Ronny Schüler, *Die Handwerksmeister am Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar* (Weimar: Verl. der Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 2013), 86; Scheper, *Colourful!*, 8.

⁶⁷ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 8.

⁶⁸ Ute Ackermann, “‘Viele Schöne Rahmen, Prachtvolle Aufmachung, Fertige Bilder’ Das Bauhaus und seine akademischen Erblasten,” in *Das Bauhaus kommt aus Weimar*, ed. Ulrike Bestgen and Ute Ackermann (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009), 25–31.

⁶⁹ Walter Gropius to Franz Heidelmann, May 6, 1920, Nr.75 Bl.49, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed July 24, 2014, urn: nbn: de: urmel-b0358aa5-0642-40f6-A626 db5f28bbcc267.

⁷⁰ In the Masters Council meeting of May 14, 1920, the students' high spirits were noted but also it was recognized that there was currently no true master, and students were given leadership roles. “Sitzung des Meisterrates am 14. Mai 1920,” in *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 85.

from his earlier practice in Vienna and was never formally appointed.⁷¹ Scheper was placed in charge of the paint supply.⁷² The third student manager, Röhl, would eventually emerge as the clearest influence in the early workshop.

What the students were learning and what they were painting from 1919 to 1920 is difficult to describe and understand. Since the workshop did not produce moveable objects like pottery or furniture, little evidence of these early student projects survives. Along with lectures from Heidelmann, there was some practical painting work around the school. Some spaces in the Bauhaus's buildings were painted, including the skylight hall in the Main building, but they were not well documented.⁷³ The only recorded project of the decorative painting workshops from the first school year was the painting of the school canteen, the cafeteria. Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, who began as a student in the workshop in spring 1920, provided a description of this project, recalling the freedom and playfulness: "So in painting the canteen (in May, 1920), its walls and ceilings, down to the final little corners that could only be reached with color-soaked sponges raised high on poles, became the playground of lively ornaments of the tiniest size and gayest colors." The community of Bauhaus wall painters, she added, "painted and squirted together," and "play entered into the serious work."⁷⁴ With this description one gets the sense that the early

⁷¹ At their September 20, 1920, along with a discussion of the opening of the Bauhaus library and a new version of the Bauhaus Program, the masters discussed the departure of Heidelmann. "Sitzung des Meisterrates am 14. Mai 1920," in *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 97.

⁷² Walter Gropius to Carl Schlemmer, April 29, 1921, Nr.114 Bl.177, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

⁷³ A competition for the decoration of the vestibule in the main Bauhaus building was discussed by the Masters Council in the fall of 1919; however this seems to never have been carried out. In addition, this competition did not seem to be geared toward student participation but for outside artists. Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 52, 95.

⁷⁴ Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, "Retrospective," in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People*, ed. Eckhard Neumann, trans. Eva Richter and Alba Lorman (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970), 115.

paintings were brightly colored and highly patterned ornamental decorations in which every corner, walls and ceilings, were covered. According to Scheper-Berkenkamp, this project was led by Röhl, and it is through him that it becomes possible to get a better understanding of the canteen painting.

Röhl is a not well known Bauhäusler; his stay at the school was brief, having left in 1922, but he continued to exuberantly support the school throughout his lifetime. He was one of a handful of students who had been enrolled at the Grand Ducal Art Academy and joined the Bauhaus wall painting workshop.⁷⁵ As mentioned above, Röhl was exactly the type of artist that the Weimar Building Committee, in summer 1919, associated with the as-yet unopened Bauhaus. He was part of a circle of expressionist students at the Art Academy that was associated with Johannes Molzahn and *Der Sturm*. In addition he was also a member of small artist group from his hometown of Kiel, which included Werner Lange and Peter Drömmmer.

Röhl worked on wall painting and wall designs throughout his career; his first wall painting was in a church in Berlin commissioned by Adolf Pochwadt.⁷⁶ The painting of the canteen was perhaps his second wall painting project. In late 1920 or early 1921, a few months after the canteen painting was completed, Röhl and his Kiel art circle painted the walls and ceiling of Lange's studio. A surviving black-and-white photograph of the painting shows a room in which the whole space is covered with geometrical abstract shapes—trapezoids, triangles, and other interlocking variations on rectangles and diamonds (figure 1.9).⁷⁷ There appears to be a

⁷⁵ Karl-Peter Röhl, "The Idea, Form, and Times of the State Bauhaus in Weimar," in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People*, 51–3.

⁷⁶ No documentation of this project survives. However, we know that Pochwadt did not like the resulting work because he complained and warned Gropius about it in a letter in May 1919. Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne*, 102.

⁷⁷ The painting of the studio space may have coincided with exhibition of the Kiel expressionists in September 1920 at the Kiel Kunsthalle. Ibid.

variety of colors, light and dark, and a window on the right sloping wall allows light to stream into the space, emphasizing the odd shape of the room and the mansard roofline. The overall design is complex and it is hard to differentiate ceiling from wall, paint from architecture. Art historian Wilhelm Niemeyer described in the short-lived Expressionist oriented art journal *Die Kündung* that the space was “perhaps the most spiritual and beautiful example of room painting of our day.”⁷⁸ This colorful wall painting with bold abstract shapes and diagonals may have resembled the Bauhaus canteen project from earlier in the year. Röhl’s painting of Gropius’s private apartment in Weimar in 1921 or 1922 offers further context and comparison for the canteen project. Gropius and his architecture partner Adolf Meyer both commissioned wall paintings from the workshop for their private homes. No surviving photographs or supporting visual documents of Röhl’s work in Gropius’s apartment exist, unlike the 1923 designs for Meyer’s apartments (discussed in the next chapter). The only indications of what these paintings may have looked like are from written sources. Much later, Bauhaus wall painting student Kurt Schmidt recalled painting over Röhl’s wall design in Gropius’s living room in 1923. He removed Röhl’s “plaster stalactites painted in every color hanging from the ceiling” in order to paint the walls in a clear and beautifully colored way.⁷⁹ According to Schmidt, Röhl’s paintings were three-dimensional, thick with plaster and paint, creating a cave-like, organic effect with many bright colors.

⁷⁸ “vielleicht das geistigste und schönste Stück Raumbemalung unserer Tage.” Wilhelm Niemeyer, “Der Maler Werner Lange,” *Kündung: Eine Zeitschrift für Kunst* 1, nos. 11–12 (1921): 168, quoted in *Ibid*, 102.

⁷⁹ “Wie hatte ich da geschwitz, um in Ihre Wohnräume die Röhl’sche Stalaktidenfarbspritzergipsgestaltung mit Hammer und Spachtel von der Decke und den Wänden zu entfernen um dann einen klaren und farbschönen Anstrich auf die Wände zu setzen.” Kurt Schmidt to Walter Gropius, August 6, 1968, quoted in Reginald R. Isaacs, *Walter Gropius: Der Mensch und sein Werk*, (Berlin: Mann, 1983), 1:471–72. See also Scheper, *Colourful!*, 10.

Beside Röhl, many expressionist painters and architects were using similar geological stalactite, multi-colored, and crystalline forms in their wall painting designs. Constanze Hofstaetter, in her book on Röhl, compared his three-dimensional forms to the stalactite-like ceiling of Hans Poelzig's Gross Schauspielhaus in Berlin of 1918–19.⁸⁰ But a closer point of comparison may be the wall paintings in Bruno Taut's Ledigenheim housing estate at Lindenhof, in Berlin-Schöneberg. The building was constructed in 1919 under the supervision of the municipal building commissioner Martin Wagner, and was designed by Taut for young unmarried people. In 1920, at least two rooms on the ground floor were painted with complex wall painting schemes; these were documented in contemporary photographs and described by Taut in a number of written sources.⁸¹ One photograph shows a curved alcove with a built-in bench, table, and hanging pendent lamp in a corner of the clubroom (figure 1.10). On the walls and ceiling, the painter Franz Mutzenbecher used both paint and plaster to create a large spiral with a three-dimensional sculptural effect, mimicking and enhancing the space of the room, and the placement of the built in furniture. In 1921 Taut described how the colors were very bright on the ceiling, gradually lightening as they went down the wall.⁸² Two years after the work was completed, Taut provided another description of the clubroom, describing it as “strong and pure” and with “warm colors.”⁸³ The spiral “turbine-like” ceiling design was composed of many colors

⁸⁰ Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne*, 102.

⁸¹ Bettina Zöller-Stock, *Bruno Taut: Die Innenraumwürfe des Berliner Architekten* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1993), 47–53.

⁸² “leuchtende Töne verschiedener Farben, über die Decken und die Wände..., welche nach unten zu, bis zum Paneel in gleichmässiger Abschattierung leichter und milder waren.” Bruno Taut, “Architekturmalereien,” *Frühlicht*, no. 2 (1921): 62, quoted in Zöller-Stock, *Bruno Taut*, 51.

⁸³ “Das Clubzimmer ist in starken und reinen, vorzugsweise warmen Farben gehalten.” Bruno Taut, “Ein Ledigenwohnheim,” *Bauwelt* no. 13 (1922): 241–43, quoted in Zöller-Stock, *Bruno Taut*, 51.

swirling towards the center, and the colors worked so well that Taut claimed even those who did not like or were not attuned to color were pleased with the design.⁸⁴

A surviving photograph documents a second painted space, the ballroom of the housing project, completed by Paul Gösch, Franz Mutzenbecher, and Gottlieb Elster (figure 1.11). The walls and ceiling of the large space were covered with multi-colored fragmented abstract shapes. Diagonal lines and zigzagging forms without a clear focus or a central theme created a wild, irreverent atmosphere. Taut wrote that the design included stalactite and crystalline growths protruding from the wall and allusions to bodily and tree-like forms.⁸⁵ The related aesthetics of three-dimensional stalactite, crystalline forms, many bright colors, expressionistic fragmentation, and diagonals were used by many artists and architects in 1920: by Taut and his collaborators, by Röhl in collaboration with the Kiel expressionists, and by Röhl in his individual work on Gropius's apartment. These comparisons enrich the re-imagination of the early wall painting projects, like the bright and vibrant Bauhaus canteen.

These playful expressionist wall paintings were not universally loved by Bauhaus members or by the public. At Lindenhof, Taut subtly admitted that it took some time for the inhabitants of the building to accept the wild wall paintings of the ballroom. Only in 1922, two years after its completion, did they accept the room for their own rowdy parties.⁸⁶ In 1933, however, when the lease of the property was taken over by the Nazis, the room was quickly

⁸⁴ “des turbinenartigen Deckenschmucks,” Ibid.

⁸⁵ “Nun sind weder Dinge dargestellt noch ist eine rhythmische Aufteilung in den Flächen vorgenommen. Auch die Hervorragungen, gelegentlich tropfsteinartig, auch wohl kristallinische Stäbe, die aus der Wand hervorstechen, sind nicht rhythmisch angeordnet. Anklänge an menschliche Körper, Köpfe, baumartige Gebilde bestimmen den Eindruck nicht, sondern lediglich die schönen und reinen Farben.” Taut, “Ein Ledigenwohnheim” 242, quoted in Zöllner-Stock, *Bruno Taut*, 51.

⁸⁶ “Und auch das Publikum stellt sich nach und nach immer unbefangener darauf ein, besonders wenn es dort tanzt und vergnügt.” Taut, “Architekturmalereien” 62, quoted in Zöllner-Stock, *Bruno Taut*, 51.

refurbished. The three-dimensional stalactites were smoothed over and replaced by stucco frames and the colors were toned down to a muted off-white. Inside the stucco frames, landscape scenes decorated the newly transformed now conservative space.⁸⁷ The similar designs in Gropius's apartment caused unfavorable reactions and, as Schmidt described, they were removed after only two years. By 1923 these expressionist paintings were already out of style, antithetical to the aesthetic prescription of Constructivism and the KURI group, to which Schmidt by then adhered. At a Master's Council meeting in 1922, Scheper commented on Röhl's painting of Gropius's apartment that "it looks as if one should or could celebrate orgies here."⁸⁸ Like Taut's ballroom, the paintings in Gropius's apartment were thought to be intoxicating.

According to Scheper-Berkenkamp, the canteen had not been conducive to eating because the walls were too busy and the colors too harsh. She recognized the canteen as the final example of playful and impractical painting. With the hindsight of forty years, Scheper-Berkenkamp reflected that the students were guiltily aware of the inappropriate use of colors used for a dining room, describing them as having an infantile quality. She argued that a shift occurred right after this early episode and that the workshop began to formulate a systematic use of color.⁸⁹ For Scheper-Berkenkamp, a painter and the wife of Hinnerk Scheper, this phase of wall painting was only a passing childish phase before her husband developed his revolutionary painting designs. While Scheper-Berkenkamp's description of the painting of the canteen was, in some sense, part of her self-interested chronology and justification for the later development of

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ "das sieht aus, als ob man hier Orgien feiern sollte oder könne." "Zu Schepers Aussagen von 9.10.22 Protokoll der Besprechung der Untersuchungskommission," October 11, 1922, Nr.12 Bl.208, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 21, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-28cba5de-3067-4ac6-a04d-633c676c5b503; Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne*, 102, 266.

⁸⁹ Scheper-Berkenkamp, "Retrospective."

the wall painting workshop, it was a controversial project for others at the school as well. The opposition to this wall painting was loud and vocal. Students felt their voice had not been heard or consulted, and the paintings were not stylistically appropriate, nor did they function suitably in the space. At the beginning of the second school year, on October 13, 1920, the masters and students held a meeting at which students asked pointed and critical questions of the faculty.⁹⁰ In this meeting the pent-up controversy about the painting of the canteen was finally released. Student Käte Reicht complained that the decorative painting was done with too little “Sachlichkeit,” a loaded term in the early decades of the century, meaning objectivity or practicality.⁹¹ She wanted the students, who were both the painters and the users of the space, to have more input in the paintings. Johannes Itten, the newly named Master of Form of the wall painting workshop, replied that the workshop learned a great deal because of this project and he defended it, explaining that a large group cannot design a work; one or two had to make the decisions and thus must bear responsibility for it. Reicht and another student, Walter Mecklenburg, continued to argue about the students’ involvement and the possibility of repainting the space. Gropius stepped in and explained that chaos and perhaps a lack of leadership were to blame for the design, indicating a more general disapproval of the wall paintings.

The fun and exuberance of the workshop and the experimentation and freedom of form of expressionistic paintings of spring and summer 1920 may have been, in part, a result of a lack of mature leadership for these young artists. Scheper-Berkenkamp was nineteen, her future husband

⁹⁰ Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 107.

⁹¹ “Fräulein Reicht ist der Ansicht, dass in Falle der Dekorationsmalerei viel zu wenig sachlich vorgegangen worden sei.” Ibid. This term suggests a move away from Expressionism. For a discussion of the term *sachlich* and *sachlichkeit* in the 1920s, see: Rosemarie Haag Bletter, Introduction to *The Modern Functional Building* by Adolf Behne, (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1996), 50.

Scheper was slightly older at twenty-three, and Röhl, perhaps the mastermind of these early projects, was only thirty years old. In her account Scheper-Berkenkamp hinted that with Itten's addition to the workshop in fall 1920 the vibrant experimentation was reformed, and a more cohesive, toned down, and tamed approach to wall painting was implemented.⁹² The canteen must have been repainted at some point, and according to Scheper-Berkenkamp, Itten "demanded a cheerless gray-green of contemplation as background for an Oriental motto, which was to educate us while we ate."⁹³ The colors were now meant to be instructional and meaningful for Itten's Masdaznan beliefs. The somber colors, at least according to Scheper-Berkenkamp, created inward and cell-like sensations in the space and promoted internal contemplation, which she critiqued for having little to do with the architectural space.⁹⁴ Itten was imparting a more unified and meaningful design strategy for the wall paintings, although Scheper-Berkenkamp did not always approve of his colors or goals.

Itten was Master of Form in many workshops, including stone sculpture, metal, glass painting, cabinet making, weaving, and, most famously, the preliminary course, in which incoming students learned the foundation for their later work and workshop study. Subsequently, Josef Albers and László Moholy-Nagy built upon Itten's course, which became one of the most well known and exported elements of Bauhaus pedagogy.⁹⁵ Rainer Wick has explained that Itten was not very interested in bringing the artistic ideas he was developing with his students in the

⁹² Scheper, *Colourful!*, 9; Scheper-Berkenkamp, "Retrospective," 115.

⁹³ Scheper-Berkenkamp, "Retrospective," 115.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Itten's pedagogical approach has been extensively documented, not only in his own books and their subsequent translations into English, but also in a number of secondary sources. See Johannes Itten, *The Art of Color: The Subjective Experience and Objective Rationale of Color*, (New York: Reinhold, 1961); Johannes Itten, *Design and Form: The Basic Course at the Bauhaus* trans. John Maass (New York: Reinhold, 1964); *Das Frühe Bauhaus Und Johannes Itten* (Ostfildern-Ruit: G. Hatje, 1994); and Rainer Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, trans. Stephen Mason (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2000).

preliminary course into the practical world of design. He was more interested in shaping a complete person, the artistic and spiritual.⁹⁶ Itten was critical of the integration of the arts, and in 1916 he had discussed wall painting specifically in his diary:

Wall Painting—architecture. Only in one tiny aspect do the two come in harmonious contact; namely, where architecture becomes an end in itself, as pure art. Only then is the fundamental attitude a pure one. Everything else is a compromise. Architecture is made “useful.” Functional architecture is an absolutely inartistic goal. There is only one art.⁹⁷

Itten’s skepticism of the integration of the arts and wall painting continued at the Bauhaus, and his theories of design, and more specifically of color, influenced the development of the wall painting workshop. Scheper-Berkenkamp explained that Itten shifted the color palettes initially used by the workshop and focused on the psychological and aesthetic effects of color on the viewer. Itten wrote later in his book *The Art of Color* that: “color is life; for a world without color appears to us as dead...Nothing affects the human mind more dramatically than the apparition of a gigantic color corona in the heavens.”⁹⁸ Although it is unclear which specific aspects of his later color theory Itten taught in the wall painting workshop in those early years, he was certainly focusing his students on the psychosocial, symbolic and aesthetic importance of the color of their wall paintings. Kandinsky continued these ideas when he succeeded the Master of Form in summer 1922.

In the winter of 1920–21, Itten students, Scala, Karl Auböck, Alfred Lipovec, and others painted the skylight hall in the main Bauhaus building, generating the primary example of an

⁹⁶ Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, 120.

⁹⁷ Itten, “Diary no. 3, May 26 1916,” quoted in *Ibid.*, 121.

⁹⁸ Itten, *The Art of Color*, 13.

Itten-supervised wall painting project.⁹⁹ Herzogenrath, in his essay in 1988 *Bauhaus Utopien*, included a lengthy description of these paintings, stating that the design included color wheels with gradations of light to dark and from yellow to dark blue.¹⁰⁰ He added that one wall was dark blue-purple with symbolic elements alluding to the sky and sun, which had the visual effect of lowering the ceiling height, and in the evening the large skylights no longer appeared like black holes.¹⁰¹ A review in the Berlin newspaper *Tägliche Rundschau* on December 2, 1920, provides another description, although a critical one: “Upstairs free rein has been given to the color sense of the Bauhaus students; they have painted the corridors according to their own taste, with every wall and every pillar different.” It went on to describe that “dirty yellow ochre stands beside toxic green yellow, Pompeian red beside scummy copper, a milky blue oil-painted door beside a pilaster in bright blue glue distemper, each without regard for contrast or variation.” Above, along the top of the ochre yellow wall was a frieze “in red ochre, and black,” which included what the author described as a terrible and lazy painting of “loud hieroglyphics, arrows, spirals, eyes, parts of steamboats, characters, without apology or desired decorative charms.” He continued, “this color terror, this attempt, served to punish us for sensitive, developed color sense, i.e. to kill off by torture.”¹⁰² For the author, this wall painting was so offensive and harsh

⁹⁹ Many of these seem to be Itten’s students from Vienna. Herzogenrath, “Wandgestaltung,” 171; Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar.”

¹⁰⁰ It is unclear where or how Herzogenrath gets this description. Herzogenrath, “Wandgestaltung,” 171.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² “Oben hat man dem Farbensinn der Bauhäusler freies Spiel gelassen, sie haben die Korridore nach eigenem Geschmack angestrichen, jede Wand, jeder Pilaster anders. Da steht ein schmutziges Ockergelb neben giftigem Grüngelb, pompeianisch Rot neben dreckigem Kupfer, eine trübblaue Ölfarbtür neben einem Pilaster in wachblauer Leimfarbe ohne jede Rücksicht auf Kontrast oder Abwandlungsreiz. Über die ockergelbe Wand zieht sich ein meterhoher, in Röteln und Schwarz, gezeichneter Fries, lauter Hieroglyphen, Pfeile, Spiralen, Augen, Teile von Dampfschiffen, Buchstaben, unsäglich roh und arm erfunden und faul gemacht, auch ohne jede Entschuldigung irgendwelchen dekorativen Reizes(bar). Uns genügte dieser *Farbenterror*, dieser

on the senses that it was dangerous. Again in this early example critics railed against the odd and even dangerous combination of colors, finding pattern and ornament offensive and inappropriate for the walls of the space. The Building Committee of Weimar might have felt they were proven right—the walls of the city hall were certainly too important, too public for a Bauhaus wall painting that looked like this. Even the walls of the school could not be painted without provoking outrage.

In this first year it was clear that the wall was a charged surface, instigating strong reactions. Itten began adjusting the colors and began developing designs that were more in relationship to the architectural space. For example, the painting of the skylight hall took into account the large openness of the room—a concept that would become more and more important as time went on. Overall from fall 1919 to winter 1920-1921, the dangerous and divisive wall paintings of the first year of the workshop were beginning to be tempered, although the controversy surrounding the early workshop would continue into 1922.

The Stuttgart Connection

Itten was the primary Master of Form for wall painting beginning in fall 1920, and sometime in 1921 Oskar Schlemmer became a secondary and alternative Master of Form for some of the workshop's projects. In summer 1921, when Carl Schlemmer, Oskar's brother, was appointed Master of Craft, the workshop finally had a stable trio of masters. The staffing process was not easy. Gropius had been placing advertisements in many professional journals in search of an appropriate Master of Craft for the wall painting workshop since Heidelmann left in spring

Versuch, empfindliches, entwickeltes Farbgefühl zu kasteien, d.h. durch Qual abzutöten." *Tägliche Rundschau* (Berlin), December 2, 1920 quoted in Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," 283.

1920.¹⁰³ A provisional appointment of Master Mendel was attempted in early 1921, but this did not work out and nothing more is known about him.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, Gropius exchanged letters with Christian Kämmerer, a well-known decorative painter in Stuttgart. In his March 10, 1921, letter Gropius asked Kämmerer if he knew and would recommend Stuttgart artist Oskar Schlemmer's brother, Carl for the job.¹⁰⁵ In describing the position of Master of Craft, Gropius explained, "He should be technically completely educated, possess no artistic arrogance and yet a fine sense for artistic suggestion."¹⁰⁶ The workshop clearly needed a technician, somebody who knew about paints, pigments, binders, and materials. This person however, should not have his or her own artistic style or strategy for wall painting. The Masters of Form, Itten and Oskar Schlemmer, were responsible for the formal and artistic component of the workshop and the Master of Craft would only fulfill a technical role. Initially Carl Schlemmer was thought to be suited for the job, although within a year of his appointment he caused controversy and instability in the wall painting workshop.

Little is known today about Carl Schlemmer other than that he was the brother of Oskar and that he sometimes helped his brother with theater productions. The only substantial research into any of the obscure Masters of Craft, such as Heidelmann, Carl Schlemmer, or yet to be

¹⁰³ Christian Kämmerer to Walter Gropius, December 7, 1920, Nr.116 Bl.199, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn: nbn: de: urmel-7d224e3d-61fa-4f2b-9397-4f9f026ebfd73.

¹⁰⁴ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 332.

¹⁰⁵ Christian Kämmerer's letterhead indicates he was involved in all aspects of decorative painting from mural painting, furniture painting, teaching in arts and crafts and posters, gilding.

¹⁰⁶ "Er müsste technisch vollkommen durchgebildet sein, keine künstlerisch Arroganz und doch einen feinen Sinn für künstlerisch Anregung besitzen." Walter Gropius to Christian Kämmerer, March 10, 1921, Nr.116 Bl.201–02, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 19, 2013, urn: nbn: de: urmel-7d224e3d-61fa-4f2b-9397-4f9f026ebfd73.

discussed Heinrich Beberniss, was recently published in 2013.¹⁰⁷ Carl was the first well-qualified appointment to the wall painting workshop, someone who was technically and creatively compatible with the Bauhaus and the needs of the workshop. Gropius understood this and hired him quickly. In a letter from April 21, 1921, Gropius confirmed Carl's appointment and described his provisional salary; before he could teach, however, he had to get certified by the local Weimar Craft Council, an important step towards appointment at the school.¹⁰⁸ The previous year, in summer 1920, student Skala was floated as a possible replacement for Heidelmann; however, he was not able to get accredited and, therefore, could not be hired. In Schlemmer's case, Gropius made a direct appeal to the Weimar Craft Council, explaining that Schlemmer would provide excellent technical strength for the workshop, which Franz Heidelmann was not able to fulfill.¹⁰⁹

By summer 1921, the three masters of the wall painting workshop—the Schlemmer brothers and Itten—had received at least part of their previous training and experience in Stuttgart, a city possessing a vibrant art and architecture avant-garde centered on the art academy, both before and after World War I. The Schlemmer brothers were originally from the city. Itten, who was Swiss and had most recently lived in Vienna had studied painting in Stuttgart, with professor Adolf Hölzel at the Stuttgart Art Academy along with Oskar

¹⁰⁷ Carl Schlemmer's qualifications included a three-year apprenticeship in decorative painting with his brother-in-law Hermann Müller and many years of work experience in Frankfurt and Berlin. Ronny Schüler, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Die Handwerksmeister am Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar* (Weimar: Bauhaus University Press, 2013), 87.

¹⁰⁸ Walter Gropius to Carl Schlemmer, March 10, 1921; Walter Gropius to Carl Schlemmer, April 21, 1921, Nr.114 Bl.170, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn: nbn: de: urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

¹⁰⁹ Walter Gropius to Weimar Craft Council, April 21, 1921, Nr.114 Bl.171, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn: nbn: de: urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister and many others. Hölzel's major influence on the ideas of Itten and other members of the Bauhaus is often cited.¹¹⁰ In addition to Hölzel's well-known influence on the basic course, his theories and examples of wall painting were critical precedents in the wall painting workshop as well. When Gropius used the phrase "painter-and-decorator," he may have been familiar with Hölzel's theories and work.

Hölzel and his friend, architect and fellow Stuttgart professor, Theodor Fischer, had been investigating the integration of painting into architectural space for many years and in a variety of projects before World War I. Their students shared this interest and often worked on these collaborations, including most notably Oskar Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister, and Fischer's earlier apprentice Bruno Taut.¹¹¹ In addition to the realization of paintings on the walls of Fischer's buildings, for these students the topic of wall painting prompted theoretical discussion of the role of painting in architecture. Fischer and Hölzel both wrote about the relationship of painting and architecture, as did the Stuttgart-based art historian Hans Hildebrandt, who in 1920 published an extensive history and theory of wall painting titled *Wandmalerei: Ihr Wesen und ihre Gesetze*, (Wall Painting: Its Nature and Its Laws).¹¹² Hildebrandt was also a friend of Schlemmer,

¹¹⁰ For example, Nina Gumpert Parris argued that the influence of Hölzel's Stuttgart teaching laid the foundations for the Weimar Bauhaus. Nina Gumpert Parris, *Adolf Hoelzel's Structural and Color Theory and Its Relationship to the Development of the Basic Course at the Bauhaus: A Dissertation in History of Art* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1979); See also Sharon Reeber, "'Art Is Religion': Adolf Hoelzel's Modernism" (master's thesis, University of Missouri—Kansas City, 2011).

¹¹¹ Taut was an apprentice in Fischer's architectural office from 1904–1908. Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "Bruno Taut and Paul Scheerbart's Vision: Utopian Aspects of German Expressionist Architecture" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1973), 9–10.

¹¹² Hans Hildebrandt, *Wandmalerei: Ihr Wesen und ihre Gesetze* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1920).

Baumeister, and the Bauhaus, and wrote about Hölzel's work.¹¹³ His wife, Lily Hildebrandt, was a student of Hölzel in the 1910s and was close to Gropius from 1919 until 1922.

For these members of the Stuttgart avant-garde, wall painting was considered critically important for the integration of the arts, an idea that Taut, Gropius and many others supported before the war and up to the founding of the Bauhaus. Taut's interest in the unification of the arts was initially based on the ideas of Fischer.¹¹⁴ For example, in 1906 Fischer's article "Was Ich bauen möchte" (What I want to build) in *Der Kunstwart*, described a new type of town, far from the city and without the usual social institutions. In the center would be a great hall with a colorful interior where no individual artworks could be displayed because the total space was a unified whole.¹¹⁵

One instance of Fischer and Hölzel's frequent collaborations was the Pfullinger Hallen, a civic space commissioned by paper manufacturer Louis Laiblin in the town of Pfullingen completed in 1906. Fischer designed the building and Hölzel designed the decorative painting scheme. The painting program in the main ballroom was executed by Hölzel's students Hans Brühlmann, Louis Moillet, Ulrich Nitschke and Melchior v. Hugo (figure 1.12). The four wall paintings are all figurative; each is painted by a different artist in a different style and with slightly varying color schemes consisting of orange, green and purple. The architectural elements—the doorways, the windows, and the large stage at one end of the hall—created odd-shaped wall areas and each composition took these features into account. In his painting, Nitschke coordinated his design with three doors, one at either end and one in the middle of the

¹¹³ Hans Hildebrandt, *Adolf Hölzel als Zeichner* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1913).

¹¹⁴ Pogacnik, "Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei," 101.

¹¹⁵ Theodor Fischer, "Was Ich bauen möchte," *Der Kunstwart* (October 1906): 5-9, quoted in Winfried Nerding, *Theodor Fischer: Architekt und Städtebauer* (Berlin: Ernst und Sohn, 1988), 332; Pogacnik, "Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei."

wall, five large windows at the top of the wall, and the dark wood paneling that clads the bottom section of the wall. The painting is split into two sections on either side of the central door, and the arched doorframes push up in the painting's space. The two paintings are almost a mirror image of each other; on each side, reclining figures with long flowing hair face away from the central door, all in a similar elegant curving position. Hölzel described the work in his 1909 article "Über bildliche Kunstwerke im architektonischen Raum" (Concerning Pictorial Artwork in Architectonic Space). In this essay he also addressed more general ideas about wall painting and the integration of painting and architecture.¹¹⁶ He discussed the bright colors, the greens and rich violets of all the Pfullinger Hallen paintings including the paintings by Brühlmann and Moillet. According to Hölzel, the left side of Nitschke's work evoked terror, with wild animals ready to spring out of the picture; in contrast standing figure playing a lyre on the right side was calming. Hölzel's description emphasized that the figures were in profile and overlapping, enhancing the flatness of the image and negating any effect of perspective or space that would break the plan of the wall.¹¹⁷

Oskar Schlemmer was directly involved with Fischer and Hölzel's collaborative work for the 1914 Werkbund Exhibition in Cologne. As with the Pfullinger Hallen, Fischer designed the building, the main hall at the famous exhibition, and Hölzel designed the overall color schemes (figure 1.13). Three students, Baumeister, Hermann Stenner, and Schlemmer, created twelve paintings for the walls under the two colonnades on the wings of the building. Schlemmer painted four of the works, each 2.5 x 3.75 meters, which depicted episodes from the history of

¹¹⁶ Adolf Hölzel, "Über Bildliche Kunstwerke im Architektonischen Raum," *Der Architekt* (1909): 34–37, 41–46, 73–80.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* An article in *Dekorative Kunst* described the two subjects as "The Fear of Creatures" and "Appeasement through Music." G. Keyssner, "Die Pfullinger Hallen," *Dekorative Kunst* 11 (1908): 193–212.

Cologne, primarily extracted from Jakob Dreesen's book on the history and legends of the city.¹¹⁸ One of Schlemmer's painting, titled *Mocking of the Devout Nun in the Convent of White Women and the Appearance of the Wonderful Cross*, is known from a contemporary black-and-white photograph of the original work and a surviving preparatory study (figures 1.14 and 1.15). In a diary entry from 1915, Schlemmer described his struggles with the painting—the new skills it required and the difficulty in transferring the sketch to the large final size—but also noted the benefit of Hölzel's instruction.¹¹⁹

Under the direct guidance of Hölzel, in this project Schlemmer started to develop his theory of wall painting. For Hölzel, pictorial works in architecture had to take into account their position in the building and the final space had to be a whole; the painting would be only one part. In his 1909, article Hölzel discussed respecting the relationship between the surface of the two-dimensional wall and the three-dimensional space. Either the space or the environment had to change and be adapted for the painting, or the painting had to change, subordinating to the needs of the space.¹²⁰ Paint and color change the architecture, one or the other had to concede. This tension, which was reiterated in Kandinsky's later writings on the topic, was experienced by Schlemmer in practice.

Later, in his 1920 book, Hans Hildebrandt echoed many of Hölzel's ideas about the nature of wall painting.¹²¹ He described how a wall painting should enhance and supplement the architectural space and not negate it. Using historical examples from Egyptian and Greek wall painting, among others, he argued that the flatness of the wall was of paramount importance. For

¹¹⁸ Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer*, 19.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹²⁰ Hölzel laid out his theories of wall painting in two articles: Adolf Hölzel, "Über Wandmalerei," *Die Rheinlande* (1908); and Hölzel, "Über Bildliche Kunstwerke Im Architektonischen Raum."

¹²¹ Hildebrandt, *Wandmalerei*.

Hildebrandt, wall painting risked breaking through the surface, creating a “hole in the wall.”¹²² The massive book included only scant references to nineteenth and twentieth-century examples. But the German artist Hans von Marees was Hildebrandt’s prime example of a nineteenth-century mural painter who recognized and emphasized the flatness of the wall surface. Hölzel was also included by Hildebrandt in his text as a representative of successful twentieth century wall painting.¹²³

The theoretical discussions and concrete examples of wall painting in Stuttgart must have been significant for the wall painting workshop masters—Itten, and the Schlemmer brothers—as they developed their own wall paintings and teaching methods.¹²⁴ What in particular did Oskar Schlemmer retain from his early wall paintings in Stuttgart? Throughout his career Schlemmer designed wall paintings with the architectural space in mind, but he was also unwilling to succumb to architecture or to give up on painting itself. Schlemmer found it difficult to integrate his paintings into the building, and he was not always successful in balancing the two. The problem or question he and other wall painters continually faced was whether painting should be independent, and possibly defy the flat surface of the wall and distract from the architectural space or whether painting should painting be contingent upon or subservient to the architecture, and maintain the integrity of the flat wall surface and enhance the architectural space. This

¹²² “Loch in der Wand,” *Ibid.*, 197. Pogacnik helpfully summarized and quoted from Hildebrandt’s massive text; see Pogacnik, “Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei,” 102.

¹²³ Hans von Marees is little known today in the United States, but was an important influence for many painters including Hölzel and Schlemmer. Pogacnik, “Gebaute Bilder Adolf Hölzel und die Wandmalerei”; Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer*.

¹²⁴ It has been noted that by the early 1920s Schlemmer and Baumeister consciously rejected much of Hölzel’s strict teaching regarding the color wheel and the golden section but retained his lessons on wall painting. Peter Chametzky, “From Werkbund to Entartung: Willi Baumeister’s ‘Wall Pictures,’” in *The Built Surface*, ed. Christy Anderson and Karen Koehler, vol. 2 (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 170.

debate continued throughout the history of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop. Wall paintings like Hölzel's or Schlemmer's figurative and pictorial works would function in both ways.

Jena's Municipal Theater

The first example of Oskar Schlemmer's supervision and planning of a wall painting at the Bauhaus came in summer 1921. Gropius and Adolf Meyer were commissioned by the nearby city of Jena to refurbish the Jena Municipal Theater (figure 1.16). Gropius was quick to include the Bauhaus workshops in the project, as he had also done with other private architectural work, such as the Sommerfeld Haus. For Gropius this commission was an important learning opportunity for the students, a real life assignment. Ulrich Müller, in his 2006 book *Walter Gropius: Das Jenaer Theater*, described in detail the history, design, and construction of the building along with a discussion of the color design. The job of painting the theater was given to the wall painting workshop at some point in the summer of 1921, as Gropius reported to the city building director Herr Bandtlow. By September, Schlemmer and the students had developed a number of plans.¹²⁵

Throughout the 1921–1922 winter semester, they worked on designs for the building, but it was a difficult process. By March, Schlemmer reported feeling very pessimistic, even depressed about it. He wrote to his friend Otto Meyer-Amden describing the difficulty of working with Gropius and complaining that Gropius believed that his design dematerialized the architecture.¹²⁶ In addition, in his journal from around this same time, Schlemmer mentioned that Itten's strong point of view about the project left little opportunity for variation or interpretation.

¹²⁵ Ulrich Müller, *Walter Gropius: Das Jenaer Theater*, Minerva, Jenaer Schriften zur Kunstgeschichte Bd. 15 (Colgne: König, 2006), 32.

¹²⁶ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer-Amden, March 13, 1922 quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius: Das Jenaer Theater*, 32.

“He (Itten) finds only one possible form of painting in Jena legitimate and has convinced the students to that effect.”¹²⁷ Schlemmer further described the difference between his vision and that of his co-Master of Form: Itten’s approach was not about “tasteful beauty” but rather “legal beauty,” an aesthetic that followed set patterns and rules.¹²⁸ For Schlemmer this permissible or formulaic approach was antithetical to his own, and he was not to be persuaded otherwise. Schlemmer described in his diary the three different phases of the project.¹²⁹ The first design for the space employed in earth tones and blocks of grays, browns, silver, and sienna. In the second phase, the space was white with a few strong colors, including red, orange, pink, purple and blue. According to Schlemmer scholar Wulf Herzogenrath, a sketch from the Schlemmer archive depicts the design at this second stage (figure 1.17). The sketch shows the sidewall of the auditorium and the door, lights, and ceiling soffits, with the stage at the left and the seats in front. Black molding follows along the bottom of the wall and around the grey door, with its large circular flange and handle. Pink outlines the black trim and above the door, the square light box is outlined by grey squares, emphasizing the cubic lamp. Above in the ceiling’s soffits, the stepped structure is painted a number of different browns. Overall the colors are soft—pinks, light browns, and grays—save for the black trim. This watercolor sketch may illustrate the color palette of the second phase, but it is insufficient for revealing Schlemmer’s overall design, strategy, painting techniques or materials that he planned to use in the space. Primarily it demonstrates Schlemmer’s idea of using paint to highlight or emphasize different elements of the architecture, like the doors and lamps, but not how these ideas were to be executed.

¹²⁷ “I.[tten] sagt, daß er die einzig mögliche Form der Ausmalung in Jena auf gesetzmäßigem Weg gefunden und die Schüler dahingehend überzeugt hatte, daß es sich nicht mehr um das Geschmacklich-Schöne, sondern das Gesetzmäßig-Schöne gehandelt hätte.” Oskar Schlemmer Diary, March 1922, quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 32.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 32–33.

The final stage included some color, sometimes “too much detailing” for Schlemmer, and he was generally displeased with the result. He described it as “colored and not colored, broken,” and he placed the blame on the rejection of his earlier plan.¹³⁰ It is unclear what happened. How did this final plan come about? Where did it go wrong? Why were elements that Schlemmer disapproved included? One source of difficulty seemed to have been Gropius as even in the planning stage Schlemmer and Gropius did not seem to agree on an approach. Perhaps Gropius vetoed the earlier plans and the resulting compromise was an inadequate version of the original. This working relationship between architect and artist was unlike the working relationship between Fischer and Hölzel he had experienced as a student.

Finally in May or June 1922, Schlemmer executed a multicolored checkerboard design for the ceiling of the auditorium with the help of his nephew Hermann Müller.¹³¹ A few witnesses described seeing the ceiling painted with this design and a document from the Schlemmer archives provides both visual and written records of the instruction he gave to Müller (figure 1.18). He told Müller to experiment with “small regular squares of different colors,” which would be uniform at a distance but would create different moods with the colors.¹³² Bauhaus student Andor Weininger saw the painting in progress, and described the checkerboard pattern as “wonderful.”¹³³ Weininger was accompanied by fellow Bauhaus students and De Stijl theoretician and artist Theo van Doesburg, who was then living in Weimar. Upon seeing the ceiling painting van Doesburg criticized it, exclaiming that it ruined the architecture.¹³⁴

¹³⁰“farbig und nicht farbig, zerrissen, zuviel Detaillierung.” quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 32.

¹³¹ Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 32–35.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 34.

¹³³ “wunderschönes.” Andor Weininger, “Weininger spricht über das Bauhaus, 1982–84,” quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 33.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

In his renovation, Gropius clad the decoration, ornament, and structure of the older nineteenth-century building with a new clean coat or layer, creating boxy soffits that stepped out from the walls and ceilings (figures 1.19–1.21). According to Gropius scholar Winfried Nerdinger, these looked like “a constructivist sculpture.”¹³⁵ On the sidewalls, four large cubic light fixtures enhanced the squareness and cubic shapes of the space, and projected out further in the space of the auditorium. Examining photographs of the auditorium’s interior with views of the ceiling, one could re-imagine that Schlemmer painted the central part of the ceiling with this checkerboard pattern and perhaps the soffits along the side walls. Schlemmer’s sketch suggests that he was attempting to deal with these square lights by either constructing, with paint or with the existing structure, a grid of squares or rectangles that framed the lights. The squares of Schlemmer’s ceiling design would have mimicked the cubic quality of the architecture and would have added a bright colorful effect to the interior.

Schlemmer attempted to use the wall and ceiling painting scheme as a complement or perhaps an enhancement to the architectural space, but he could have gone too far in the ceiling design. Van Doesburg may have had a point that Schlemmer’s colorful checkerboard ceiling destroyed the architecture and confused the sculptural effect, adding a busy pattern to the clean lines and flat surfaces of the renovations. The wall or ceiling surfaces could have conflicted with and undermined the tectonics of the space and the solidity of the wall. If the ceiling painting did confuse the space or create a “hole in the wall,” the whole could have been compromised, and Hölzel as well as Hildebrandt probably would have been displeased.

¹³⁵ Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *The Walter Gropius Archive: An Illustrated Catalogue of the Drawings, Prints, and Photographs in the Walter Gropius Archive at the Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University* (New York: Garland, 1990), 54.

The Van Doesburg Problem

Van Doesburg moved to Weimar in April 1921, hoping to join the Bauhaus faculty but Gropius never hired him. In February 1922 van Doesburg announced that he would be teaching a competing De Stijl course, held in the studio of the wall painting student Röhl. During this time the de Stijl leader courted many Bauhäusler, especially those who wanted to study architecture, which was not yet taught at the Bauhaus. Many quickly came under the “spell” of van Doesburg, as Schlemmer specifically described in a March 1922 letter to Otto Meyer.¹³⁶ In this letter, written before the final design of the Jena Theater was completed, Schlemmer considered the relationship of painting to architecture and van Doesburg’s belief that painting should support and mirror architecture.¹³⁷ In contrast to van Doesburg, Schlemmer stated:

It seems to me that the laws of architecture differ from those of painting. When painting serves a function within architecture, it must, of course obey its laws. Kandinsky tried to make painting be music; now it is trying to emulate architecture or the machine. Painting should remain what it is, perfect itself within its own limits, just like music, architecture, the machine, technology, and science. I firmly believe that the laws of painting have not changed now and never will. It would be a laudable achievement to restore them to their former glory, thus counteracting the confusion of artistic standards for which one can blame much of what is going on today.¹³⁸

Using a formalist reading Schlemmer called for a purer form of painting, which stayed within its own laws and limits, but he also conceded that painting, when used in architecture, had to submit to a different set of laws. This description of the relationship of painting to architecture originated in Hölzel’s teaching, but Schlemmer, despite declaring that he wanted to obey

¹³⁶ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer March 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 118.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 117. According to Schlemmer, van Doesburg approved of Schlemmer’s work at this moment, although he apparently was a little critical of it for being soft and still rooted in figural forms.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 118.

architecture's laws when working in a building, still wanted painting to be painting. He resisted painting becoming something that it was not, and was unwilling to look to music, the machine, or architecture as a source or model. The tension between painting's authority and laws, and those of architecture was brought to the surface in the Jena Municipal Theater project and with van Doesburg's criticism of it. Does the painter have artistic license and freedom to paint as he chooses, or does the architect and the architecture have the final say?

The painter Walter Dexel, who was director of the Jena Art Union in the 1920s and friend of the Bauhaus, also wrote about the relationship and disagreements between Schlemmer and van Doesburg in summer 1922. He described a situation in which Schlemmer, Gropius and van Doesburg were at Dexel's house in Jena for the afternoon. At this gathering van Doesburg harshly attacked Schlemmer's paintings in the foyer and auditorium of the theater. Neither Gropius nor Schlemmer provided much of a response, and overall, according to Dexel, the confrontation was uncomfortable.¹³⁹ The earlier support, which van Doesburg had given Schlemmer back in March, had disappeared by late spring or summer. After van Doesburg's criticism—perhaps because of it—Gropius ordered Schlemmer's ceiling and wall design painted over with gray. Gropius reported this to a member of the Jena City Council on July 15, 1922, and explained that he would pay for this extra expense.¹⁴⁰

Schlemmer was, unsurprisingly, crushed by his wall painting's unauthorized destruction. Lothar Schreyer, a fellow Bauhaus master wrote, "I found Oskar Schlemmer sitting in his sculpture workshop on a sculpture stool, a wrecked man, sallow, beads of sweat on the nude shaven skull. The expression of the face was of a chastised child, who does not comprehend why

¹³⁹ Walter Dexel, "The Bauhaus style—A Myth, (1964)" in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People*, 106.

¹⁴⁰ Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 35.

he is being chastised.”¹⁴¹ The destruction of at least part of his wall painting scheme for the Jena theater was certainly a blow to Schlemmer’s confidence, but it also highlighted a more fundamental problem for the wall painting workshop at the Bauhaus: how would the wall painter and the architect work together? Schlemmer struggled with this question in a June 1922 letter to Otto Meyer: “I have too much to do and thus accomplish nothing. Can I want to build? Can I want to become a servant of architecture? I can’t do anything—when I am told I have to! I can only do what I want to do and what I have learned.”¹⁴²

As Schlemmer had experienced, painting older buildings, such as van de Velde’s art school building, could be controversial, as many of the early Bauhaus projects like the canteen, were. Yet painting new architecture, and working with the architect, proved even more difficult. In Jena, Schlemmer learned the hard way that Gropius was completely in charge of his building and how it looked. After this, Schlemmer usually painted existing buildings, which allowed him to impose his own vision without the involvement of the building’s architect. One example was—for example, his paintings at the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition and in Adolf Meyer’s apartment. For the whole wall painting workshop, as it was given more commissions outside the confines of the school, this was an important lesson. The walls and ceilings of architecture were always important and controversial surfaces, causing strong reactions from architects, buildings users, and viewers.

Even though his wall paintings in the Jena Theater were in part painted over, Adolf Meyer still credited Schlemmer for the management of the artistic paintwork in the September 1922 official announcement of the building’s completion, which provided a listing of the

¹⁴¹ Lothar Schreyer “Die Kunstfigur,” quoted in *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁴² Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer, June 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 123.

architects, craftsmen, and businesses involved in the renovation.¹⁴³ An October 2, 1922, article in the local newspaper *Jenaische Zeitung*, provided the best description of the final color scheme of the building.¹⁴⁴ The writer, Oskar Rhode, narrated the color scheme by describing the experience of moving through the space with views through doorways and down hallways. There were many colors used in the interior and each distinct section in a room had their own colors. The two entry foyers, which led into a long lobby were painted blue (figure 1.22). The main lobby included the cashier's window and a refreshments area. Rhode wrote, "The refreshments room is the lightest of the entire building in a joyful, yellowish shade."¹⁴⁵ Two coatrooms flanked the auditorium (figure 1.23).¹⁴⁶ According to Rhode, the walls of the coatrooms were painted a matte violet and the staircase that led to the upper balcony level was terracotta. After leaving the colorful lobby and climbing the stairs one entered the gray auditorium through a set of doors with semi-circular copper door handles. Rhode described the feeling of surprise he felt upon walking into an almost completely gray space (that of Gropius's overpainting).¹⁴⁷ He mentioned the four cubic lights, the architectural details of the ceiling, and gray soffits. This ceiling was the most distinctive feature of the room. Aside from gray, the colors in the auditorium included blue (on the stage curtain and repeated on some of the balcony walls), and a reddish or salmon pink.¹⁴⁸

While some of Schlemmer's plan, at least some of the color scheme, was executed in Jena, another extant plan for ceiling painting in the auditorium exists. Scheper designed a bright

¹⁴³ Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 34–35.

¹⁴⁴ Oskar Rhode, "Das Neue Theater Der Stadt Jena," *Jenaische Zeitung*, October 2, 1922, quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 35.

¹⁴⁵ "Der Erfrischungsraum ist der lichteste des ganzen Hauses in einer freudigen, gelblichen Tönung." Rhode, "Das Neue Theater Der Stadt Jena," quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 35.

¹⁴⁶ The photographs do not help in distinguishing color or even tone.

¹⁴⁷ Rhode, "Das Neue Theater Der Stadt Jena," quoted in Müller, *Walter Gropius*, 35.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

rainbow color scheme (figure 1.24). In this design, each section of the ceiling would have been painted four different shades of one color, depending on the ceiling height, and each color would have been separated by gray bands. The nearest to the stage would be yellow, then green, orange, red, pink, teal, and blue. The dark teal and blue colors would have been over the balcony section. It is unclear when Scheper's design was developed. Renate Scheper explained that it was not used because Scheper had misunderstood the space and the architectural plan.¹⁴⁹ However, it is telling to compare the approaches of Schlemmer and Scheper in designing the ceiling. While Schlemmer developed a checkerboard pattern, mimicking the shapes within the space, the painting would have most likely drawn the viewer's eye away from the architecture, absorbing their attention with the pattern. Scheper's plan, on the other hand, might have emphasized the soffits of the space and the architectonic qualities of the room without distracting with pattern. It is no surprise that Scheper's plan as future leader of the workshop looks more like later designs, when the workshop's wall paintings become much more conditional to the architectural space and structure.

During Scheper's time as journeyman in the workshop from spring 1920 to spring 1922 when he passed his master's exam, he had been developing some practical experience and his own approach to designing wall painting schemes. In 1921, he designed the color scheme for Haus Mendel, a project of Gropius and Meyer's private architectural office. In 1922, he established his own wall painting practice and was commissioned to create a color scheme for the Palace Museum and for the State Museum in Weimar. Scheper's return to the Bauhaus in 1925 and his wall painting methodology will be more thoroughly discussed in chapter three.

¹⁴⁹ Renate Scheper, discussion with the author, Berlin, June 25, 2013.

Schlemmer's "Middle Way"

The Jena Theater project was a turning point for the Bauhaus in general and for the wall painting workshop specifically. With this project, Gropius's architecture shifted away from the expressionist forms of the Sommerfeld Haus and towards his more simple *Neues Bauen* style. For the wall painting workshop, shifting forces of influence emerged, away from Hölzel and the Stuttgart artists. As the workshop matured in 1922, Itten and Schlemmer's influence began to diminish. Itten's power was weakening at the school after disagreements with Gropius about his teaching style, his Mazdaznan religious beliefs, and his dislike of the students working on outside commissions. Itten was entirely replaced by Schlemmer as Master of Form in the wall painting workshop in a reorganization of the workshops that took place in January 1922; he eventually left the Bauhaus in April 1923.¹⁵⁰ In a letter to Otto Meyer in June 1922, Schlemmer reported on the Itten problem, lamenting that the school would be losing such a good teacher; yet he added, "But Gropius already has a new man up his sleeve: Wassily Kandinsky!"¹⁵¹

Kandinsky's appointment was significant; it marked the end of Schlemmer and Itten as dual Masters of Form and ushered in a new leadership structure in the workshop. In addition, by December 1922, Carl Schlemmer also left the school after a dispute with Gropius. In the months leading up to the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition, the workshop realigned to Kandinsky's theories of wall painting. Herman Müller was briefly hired to help in the workshop, and then Heinrich Bebernis settled in as a new Master of Craft. But there were also more subtle shifts of influence due to van Doesburg's and his De Stijl course.¹⁵² Indeed, the literature on the workshop commonly includes a discussion of the influence of van Doesburg on the wall painting

¹⁵⁰ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 15.

¹⁵¹ Oskar Schlemmer to Otto Meyer, June 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 123.

¹⁵² Hofstaetter, *Karl Peter Röhl und die Moderne*, 66.

students.¹⁵³ But the shift, by 1923, of both the style and the approach to wall painting is, as we shall see, also closely related to Kandinsky's appointment. The last trace of Schlemmer's influence on the wall painting workshop appeared in his wall paintings for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition, one section of which was reconstructed from 1979 to 1980. Since Schlemmer was a member of the exhibition planning committee, he was able to assign himself a large wall painting commission. His theory of wall painting was evolving from his focus on pure painting toward a conciliatory unification of painting, sculpture, and architecture. One of the first projects that Gropius and Schlemmer envisioned for the 1923 exhibition was the decoration of the main Bauhaus building's vestibule. For Schlemmer, the vestibule provided the opportunity to realize the next step in the combination of painting and sculpture in architecture. According to Schlemmer, the Bauhaus mission was to stop the regression back into picture painting and instead "to raise painting and sculpture to the functions that they had for long time," that is, for painting to be "part of architecture as space and wall design."¹⁵⁴

Schlemmer in his diary on November 1922 expressed his understanding of the possibilities for the vestibule and its potential to represent Bauhaus architecture.¹⁵⁵ The size and specifics of the project limited what wall painter and sculptor could do.

For the present we have our simple building and must take the representative where we find it. The vestibule cries out for creative shaping. It could become the trademark of the Bauhaus; within the space created by van de Velde we shall combine wall painting with sculpture, displaying them in a context, which

¹⁵³ For example, see Rainer Wick, "De Stijl, Bauhaus, Taut: Zur Rolle der Farbe im Neuen Bauen," *Kunstforum International* 57 (1983): 60–74.

¹⁵⁴ "sondern den vielmehr die Malerei und Plastik zu den Funktionen erheben, die sie zu großen Zeiten hatten: Teil der Architektur als Raum- und Wandgestaltung." Oskar Schlemmer, typewritten note, in Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, quoted in Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung," 169.

¹⁵⁵ Diary, November 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 132.

normally seldom presents itself. But we must show them in this context if we ever hope to receive jobs of this sort, and even better ones.¹⁵⁶

This project was a chance to reveal what Bauhaus wall painting could be, perhaps redeeming it from the failure at the Jena Theater. Battered and disheartened by the experience of Jena, Schlemmer was still hopeful that the unification of the arts was possible with wall painting at its core.

The plan to redo the vestibule was met with opposition from the Weimar Academy, which shared the main school building with the Bauhaus. A more conservative and traditional art school, the new Weimar Academy had splintered off from the Bauhaus in 1921. In January 1923, Gropius wrote a letter to the academy describing the proposed work, saying that the intent was to “make the vestibule a center of attraction for the students and the citizens and to bridge the differences between academy and Bauhaus.” The reconciliatory plan was to demonstrate the universal and shared ideas of the two schools and “to remove from this room the present atmosphere of emptiness.” Elemental forms and primary colors would be used, and an interactive rotating color wheel and prisms would demonstrate the spectrum of colors. The human figure would have a place of prominence with anatomical charts and simple line drawings, including citations of Albrecht Dürer, which revealed Schlemmer’s interest and also the traditional art academy’s lessons.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 131–32. In addition to Schlemmer, many wall painting students submitted designs for the space but none of these has survived or have been described. Schlemmer’s design may have look something like his later realized project in the workshop building, which will be discussed below.

¹⁵⁷ Walter Gropius, “On the Proposed Remodeling of the Vestibule of the Weimar Art School, for the Bauhaus Exhibition Summer 1923,” in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), 64.

Gropius's references to Dürer and also Runge as well as to Goethe, was no coincidence, as they evoked the shared art historical tradition of both art schools. But they also made the Bauhaus appear less revolutionary and radical. Gropius emphasized as well that Schlemmer would supervise the project but the students would carry out the work.¹⁵⁸ Van de Velde wrote from Belgium in approval of the design, yet the Weimar Art Academy resisted the project.¹⁵⁹ In the end, despite some negotiations, Gropius's proposed plan was not approved; the painting of the public walls of this building was considered too risky and contentious. The shared walls could not become a representation of the Bauhaus only. In the end, the vestibule of the main building was decorated with plaster reliefs by Joost Schmidt, a student in the wood sculpture workshop, also lead by Schlemmer, and the wall painting workshop was not involved. Schmidt's plaster geometric forms penetrated and protruded from the wall surface (figure 1.25). The forms were reminiscent of Schlemmer's but without clear reference to human figures. The relief either maintained the natural tone of the plaster or was painted white. In addition, the wrought iron staircase of van de Velde's vestibule was covered up with a solid plaster wall that echoed the geometrical shapes of Schmidt's relief. The reliefs had to be removed after the close of the exhibition, and Schmidt himself probably removed them in 1924.

Although Schlemmer's plan for the main Bauhaus building vestibule fell through, he was able to design and implement a complex wall painting scheme in the workshop building, which is located across a small courtyard from the main building. Van de Velde designed the workshop building in 1905-1906 for his Arts and Craft school and in 1923 it was primarily used by the

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Walter Gropius, "Zu den verschiedenen Plänen für die erst größere Ausstellung des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Sommer 1923 gehört auch derjenige der Umgestaltung und Ausgestaltung des Vestibüls des Kunstschulgebäude.," January 23, 1923, Nr.38 Bl.6, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed February 25, 2015, urn: nbn: de: urmel-92a9b916-1930-4266-bcb0-884c263e6de55.

Bauhaus. Schlemmer's works in the entry of the workshop building are the most well-known of the wall paintings executed for the 1923 exhibition. In reference to the 1923 exhibition and this installation, Hans Winkler has written that: "the most significant artistic contribution was Schlemmer's design of the vestibule and staircase in the building housing the workshops, for which he employed both painting and sculpture. This work amounted to a broad and well-considered attempt to achieve a synthesis of the arts within architecture."¹⁶⁰ These works are documented in black-and-white photographs; watercolor sketches; a three-dimensional model of the original design, reconstructed by Alfred Arndt in 1955; and a few preparatory sketches (figure 1.26 – 1.27). Using these documents and with descriptions of the projects, the paintings were in part reconstructed in the 1970s (figure 1.28 – 1.30).

According to Herzogenrath, who carried out an in-depth study of these works, the subject of the design was "Man,"—humanity.¹⁶¹ Schlemmer described the reasons for such a theme and the importance of murals in his diary in November 1922:

The mural has always been prized as the form of painting which, unlike the self-sufficient easel picture, with its risk of becoming l'art pour l'art, exists in a close relationship to space and architecture; the Bauhaus must provide a refuge and a good solution for this form. The mural must be give ethical underpinnings; the idea it depicts must be one of universal validity or should at least contain the values necessary for acquiring such validity. It falls to the mural to express the great themes. This function still remains—in fact, today more than ever. The will to fulfill this function is present today, specifically in German painting.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Winkler, *The Bauhaus*, 6.

¹⁶¹ Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer*, 40–62. Schlemmer designed wall painting and sculptural reliefs for the large entry vestibule for the workshop building and he and the students implemented the designs. At the entrance of the building paintings on the ceilings and reliefs on the walls at the entrance included simplified figures. The colors were mostly earth tones and Schlemmer described these himself in: Schlemmer, "Design Principles for the Painting and Sculpture Decoration of the Workshop Building of the Staatliche Bauhaus from 'Das Kunstblatt' Vol 7, 1923," *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, 65.

¹⁶² Diary, November 1923, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 132.

He believed that murals held great importance for society, moderating between conservatism and anarchy. His moral and ethical motivation for mural painting and his desire to use themes like man for his design distinguished his vision of wall painting and architecture from that of Kandinsky, who believed in a monumental art of abstract forms, depending on color sensation and integration of painting into the architectural space. Schlemmer's project provided his student assistants experience with techniques, materials and color effects, and his design evinced a sensitivity to the architectural space and an interest in the viewer's movement through it. Schlemmer wrote, "At stake here is finding a middle way, usually so despised, for it alone promises the ardently desired synthesis between architecture, painting and sculpture."¹⁶³ In an article in the *Das Kunstblatt* in 1923, Schlemmer described the colors as earth tones and as having a natural harmony.¹⁶⁴ For him, the stairs, flanked with sculpture reliefs in silver and bronze, produced movement "corresponding to the dynamics of the stairs...standing, inclining, plunging, falling, also floating, flying."¹⁶⁵

The most prominent components of the original design and its reconstruction are the large figures painted in the curved wall of the large winding staircase, which leads to the second floor. Schlemmer described them as, "large, pale-colored torso figures ascending."¹⁶⁶ Connected by the human figure, the overall design in the earth-toned colors unifies the rather large space and many different wall and ceiling surfaces. While working on the design in July or August, Schlemmer wrote in his diary: "What we have to work with—van de Velde's treatment of the

¹⁶³ Ibid., 132–33.

¹⁶⁴ Schlemmer, "Design Principles for the Painting and Sculpture Decoration of the Workshop Building of the Staatliche Bauhaus from 'Das Kunstblatt' Vol 7, 1923," 65.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 65.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

space, the sober, whitewashed walls.”¹⁶⁷ He envisioned the main curving staircase as a main feature of the building, the central artery. The figures seem to climb the stairs with the viewer, twisting and turning, “floating, flying.”¹⁶⁸ Schlemmer searched for this “middle way”—the space between easel painting and architecture—as he endeavored towards a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

Van de Velde’s building has subtle *Jugendstil* inclinations, from the curving stairs and ornate decorative handrail and spindles to the door moldings and door handles. Schlemmer’s forms, at least the ones reconstructed and viewable today, in some ways complement the curving *Jugendstil* lines. Upon entering the building, the visitor is greeted or perhaps intimidated by large figures. The two routes in the building were clearly delineated in the original design with the paintings and reliefs; the movement of walking up stairs is reflected in the wall pictures. In this building Schlemmer was able to control every element of his design—no architects or users of the space challenged him; and for this one instance the power was in the hands of the artist.

While it may be true, as Herzogenrath said, that this project is the “artistically greatest and most extensive wall design of this exhibition—and furthermore of the Bauhaus in Weimar,”¹⁶⁹ these paintings are distinctive—different from any student work, and also inherently connected to Schlemmer’s prior and later painting. They are fundamentally related to his easel paintings, and although Schlemmer adjusted the compositions for the architecture and the total space, they are also noticeably related to his Bauhaus theater designs and overall artistic project, rather than with the wall painting workshop of 1923 and the new wall painting teachings of Kandinsky. The next chapter investigates other wall painting projects for the 1923 Bauhaus

¹⁶⁷ Diary, July/August 1923, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 141–142.

¹⁶⁸ Schlemmer, “Design Principles for the Painting and Sculpture Decoration of the Workshop Building of the Staatliche Bauhaus from ‘Das Kunstblatt’ Vol 7, 1923,” 65.

¹⁶⁹ “Die künstlerisch bedeutendste und umfangreichste Wandgestaltung dieser Ausstellung – und darüber hinaus des Bauhauses in Weimar—ist die Gesamt-Konzeption Oskar Schlemmers für das Werkstatt-Gebäude.” Herzogenrath, “Wandgestaltung,” 172.

exhibition. Schlemmer explained, by way of quoting Kandinsky, that this exhibition would be a “world event,” and a real chance to explore the “synthesis between architecture, painting, and sculpture.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ Diary, November 1922, in *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, 133.

Chapter Two

The Move to Color: Wassily Kandinsky and The 1923 Bauhaus Exhibition

The eighteen months between Kandinsky's arrival at the Bauhaus in summer 1922 and his April 1924 memo on wall painting were pivotal for the workshop. They bridged the gap between the controversial wall painting designs of the first few years to the more cohesive, subtle, and architecture-focused projects of 1923 and beyond. Beginning in 1922, the Bauhaus was pressured by local officials to display the school's progress, and to mount an exhibition of work and projects from the school's early years.¹ The decision to plan a large exhibition was finalized in September 1922, and with this new motivation the students and masters spent the next ten months working long hours to plan and prepare for this important public display of their work. The exhibition, along with its accompanying catalogue, provided the outside world its first glimpse into what was happening in Weimar.

The influence of van Doesburg and Kandinsky shaped the wall painting workshop as it geared up for the exhibition, when it would get its long-awaited chance to paint many of the walls of both the old architecture of van de Velde's buildings and the new architecture of the Haus am Horn. According to Bayer, "in preparing for the exhibition, the van de velde bauhaus building itself was to be 'decorated' and to receive art and design."² As Farkas Molnár described, "Colourful reliefs were stilled in the stairways and halls of the main building as

¹ Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933* (Cologne: Taschen, 2002), 105–9.

² Herbert Bayer, "murals at the bauhaus building in weimar (1923): a statement about the wall-painting workshop at the bauhaus" (1978), in *Herbert Bayer: The Complete Work*, ed. Arthur A. Cohen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984), 341.

public examples of innovative spatial designs.”³ Since the wall painting workshop’s founding in 1919, the workshop’s masters and students had gained considerable experience painting the wall, although they still had no unified style or conception of the role of wall painting in architecture. They would never, in fact, come to a consensus. Painting on the wall had and would continue to be challenging and controversial.

This chapter traces the workshop from Kandinsky’s arrival in Weimar in 1922 through the 1923 exhibition, examines the wall painting workshop’s contributions to the 1923 exhibition and situates these examples of Bauhaus wall painting in the context of the important changes in workshop leadership of the previous year, and the developing use of color in architecture. The wall painting workshop’s contribution to this school-wide exhibition included paintings, both on the walls of the workshop and in the common spaces of both school buildings. The paintings were eclectic; they included large figurative and geometric murals as well as wall color schemes. These varying approaches typify the still nascent wall painting workshop in 1923 and provide glimpses of the workshop’s future direction, which resulted in Kandinsky’s 1924 statement of purpose for the wall painting workshop. Two new masters joined the workshop in 1922, Heinrich Bebernis and Kandinsky, and they were significant in shaping the workshop’s new projects, although their importance to the wall painting projects is usually overlooked. Most discussions of the exhibition consider only two wall painting projects: Oskar Schlemmer’s complex paintings and reliefs in the workshop building and Bayer’s paintings in the back staircase of the main building.⁴ Although this chapter will briefly consider Schlemmer and Werner Gilles’s 1923

³ Farkas Molnár, “Life at the Bauhaus” (1925), in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930*, ed. Timothy O Benson, trans. John Bátki (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2002), 462–65.

⁴ For example Gillian Naylor, *The Bauhaus Reassessed* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985).

designs in Adolf Meyer's apartment, Schlemmer's wall paintings for the exhibition were primarily tangential to the approach of the wall painting workshop in 1923 and as a result were discussed in the previous chapter.

The apparent enlargement of Kandinsky's well-known questionnaire about the relationship of color and form (figure 2.20) onto wall paintings on the back staircase by Bayer is the singular discussed and often illustrated project of the Weimar wall painting workshop (figure 2.16). Despite the fame of Bayer's staircase paintings today as the most familiar example of a workshop student's contribution to the exhibition, in-situ shots of the wall paintings were not illustrated in the important exhibition catalogue. Rather, they became well known only fifteen years later in the legacy establishing 1938 Bauhaus exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, organized by Bayer and Gropius.⁵ In many later Bauhaus texts, Bayer's gouache of the design is printed in full color.⁶ Unlike many black-and-white photographs of the other wall paintings, the gouache is eye catching. The fame, therefore, of these paintings is in part the result of the later historiography of the Bauhaus. Schlemmer's and Bayer's paintings often overshadow the impact of Kandinsky or the work of other members of the workshop. Kandinsky's wall paintings for the Juryfreie Kunstschau (Jury-Free Art Exhibition) in Berlin, which he produced just a year before the exhibition, must be considered with as much depth and focus as Schlemmer's and Bayer's works. In fact, in order to understand the importance of Kandinsky to the overall development of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop, one must examine the total output of the workshop, and its diversity and complexity. While some of the literature on the

⁵ Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919–1928* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938).

⁶ For example, Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933*, 90; and Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 152.

workshop, including Renate Scheper's 2005 catalogue, lists the different wall painting projects from the exhibition, no one has yet focused on all the wall painting workshop's contributions to the exhibition.⁷

The major difficulty in categorically understanding the whole scope of the wall painting workshop's contribution is caused by the destruction or loss of the projects and poor documentation of the original wall paintings. Most of the wall painting projects are only known through black-and-white photographs, and these are often difficult to read—they flatten and confuse the space, scale, and colors of the original paintings. The majority of the photographs that have survived are those published in the important 1923 exhibition catalogue.⁸ This catalogue included sections devoted to each workshop. The title page for this workshop, like those of the other workshops, identifies the workshop's leaders: Master of Form, Kandinsky, and Master of Craft, Bebernis (figure 2.21). Four examples of the workshop's paintings follow. The catalogue is a critical resource for documenting the little-known or little-discussed student works by Josef Maltan, Alfred Arndt, Molnár, and others, but the photographs included are also

⁷ The best attempts at cataloguing all of the 1923 projects and summarizing the development, execution and reception of the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition in great detail, and with some newly published photographs are Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, ed., *Bauhaus Alben 4: The Bauhaus Exhibition of 1923, The Haus am Horn, Architecture, The Stage Workshop, The Printing Workshop*, trans. Steven Lindberg (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2009); and Klaus-Jürgen Winkler ed., *Bauhaus Alben 3: The Weaving Workshop, The Wall-Painting Workshop, The Glass-Painting Workshop, The Bookbinding Workshop, The Stone-Carving Workshop*, trans. Steven Lindberg (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2009).

⁸ This book, with its typography and page design by the hugely influential new master, László Moholy-Nagy, was a statement of the new direction of the school and a revision of the original 1919 manifesto. In it, and with the exhibition's opening lecture, Gropius declared the goal of uniting the projects of the Bauhaus with mass production, creating prototypes for industry, and effectively ending the expressionistic early phase of the school and ushering in the Constructivist influenced phase which would culminate with the Bauhaus Dessau buildings in 1925. Karl Nierendorf, ed., *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar, 1919–1923* (Weimar: Bauhausverlag, 1923).

understood as documents in themselves, selected to demonstrate different aspects of the workshop's project.⁹

The 1923 Bauhaus exhibition is the most well known event of the Weimar Bauhaus. The school's new motto, "Art and Technology: A New Unity"—proclaimed at the exhibition in an opening lecture by Gropius to mark the change from its earlier orientation toward expressionism and craft—is one of many aspects of the exhibition that are frequently examined. The Haus am Horn—the experimental house built and furnished by the school as a demonstration of Bauhaus ideals—the remodeling of Gropius's office, Oskar Schlemmer's Triadic Ballet, the posters and printed materials created for the exhibition, the new typographic style of László Moholy-Nagy, and the important shift in Bauhaus ideology are among other elements repeatedly discussed in the secondary literature.

The wall painting workshop's contributions to some of these well-known 1923 projects, as well as the workshop's many obscure and little-known or infrequently documented paintings for the 1923 exhibition, are rarely discussed at length or with substantial critical focus. For example, Droste discussed the Haus am Horn, but did not mention the interior wall colors and paintings by the wall painting workshop.¹⁰ In texts focused on the wall paintings workshop, the paintings, photographs, and surviving sketches produced for the exhibition provide some of the first solid visual evidence of the workshop's projects and often act as representatives of the first four years. For instance, Wulf Herzogenrath, in his discussion of the early wall painting workshop in *Bauhaus Utopien* (1988), focused almost exclusively on the wall paintings for the

⁹ In addition to the limited photographs published in the original catalogue, Klaus-Jürgen Winkler has recently published a few additional photographs of some of the 1923 paintings in *Bauhaus-Alben 3*. These photographs along with his essay on the Weimar wall painting workshop are extremely helpful to understanding these works. Winkler, "The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar," in *Bauhaus-Alben 3*, 120–49.

¹⁰ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*.

1923 exhibition, and on Oskar Schlemmer's works in particular.¹¹ However, as discussed in chapter one, the workshop had been experimenting and producing wall paintings since 1919. It is insufficient to understand the Weimar wall painting workshop only as displayed in the 1923 exhibition, for in actuality the exhibition was both a culmination of the earlier experiments in wall painting and the beginning of a new phase of the workshop.

Pioneer Bauhaus scholar Wingler alluded to the wall painting workshop's participation in the Haus am Horn and he illustrated two examples of student's wall painting works, but his great praise was for Oskar Schlemmer's wall paintings in the workshop building. Schlemmer was a Master of Form in the workshop for a year and his wall painting design, illustrated in contemporary photographs, although not published in the original 1923 catalogue, was documented in many sources. For many, it was the best example of Weimar Bauhaus wall painting.¹² Recently Renate Scheper described Schlemmer's paintings as the "climax" of the classical mural, discussing the installation at great length.¹³ The downside of concentrating on Schlemmer's project is that by 1923 he was no longer a master in wall painting workshop.

The influence of de Stijl and its representative van Doesburg's presence in Weimar have often been cited as a significant factor for Gropius and the Bauhaus in their shift of style and ideology and for developments in the wall painting workshop.¹ The classes that de Stijl representative van Doesburg was teaching in Karl Peter Röhl's studio had a sizeable effect on all

¹¹ Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung," in *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1988), 169–88.

¹² Hans M. Wingler and Joseph Stein, eds., *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 332, 383. These sources include Schlemmer's plan and perspective drawing, a reconstructed model by Alfred Arndt from 1955, and a restoration of the work in its original location completed in 1980.

¹³ Renate Scheper, *Colourful! The Wallpainting Workshop at the Bauhaus* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2005), 16; Wulf Herzogenrath, *Oskar Schlemmer: Die Wandgestaltung der neuen Architektur* (Munich: Prestel, 1973); Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung."

Bauhaus students including those studying wall painting. De Stijl's noteworthy influence has been considered by numerous scholars, including Rainer Wick, who discussed the important connection of de Stijl to Bauhaus wall painting.¹⁴ Nancy Troy, and other scholars, have also examined de Stijl's integration of painting and architecture.¹⁵ Wick dismissed many of the wall painting workshop's designs, including the passageway design of Peter Keler and Farkas Molnár's, describing it as derivative of de Stijl, without examining them on their own merits.¹⁶ This collaboration between two students surely related to de Stijl tenets, but it also aligned with Kandinsky's goals for the workshop and, in addition, it indicated a link to Hungarian Constructivism. Many scholars also discussed the redesign of Gropius's office as a predominant demonstration of de Stijl design at the Bauhaus with comparisons often made to de Stijl architect Gerrit Rietveld.¹⁷

Constructivism, by way of the Hungarians at the Bauhaus, including Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Breuer, and Molnár, has become increasingly understood as important to the shift at the Bauhaus and for wall painting.¹⁸ Leah Dickerman noted that the switch to a new slogan and style

¹⁴ Rainer Wick, "De Stijl, Bauhaus, Taut: Zur Rolle der Farbe im Neuen Bauen," *Kunstforum International* 57 (1983): 60–74; Rainer Wick, "Bauhausarchitektur und Farbe," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen Weimar* 5/6 (1983): 483–87.

¹⁵ Nancy J Troy, *The De Stijl Environment* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983); Allan Doig, *Theo van Doesburg: Painting into Architecture, Theory into Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Yve-Alain Bois, "Mondrian and the Theory of Architecture," *Assemblage*, no. 4 (October 1, 1987): 103–30; Evert van Straaten, *Theo van Doesburg: Painter and Architect* (The Hague: SDU, 1988).

¹⁶ Wick, "Bauhausarchitektur und Farbe," 483.

¹⁷ Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung"; Klaus-Jürgen Winkler and Gerhard Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer: Geschichte und Rekonstruktion des Direktorenraumes am Staatlichen Bauhaus in Weimar 1923/24* (Weimar: Verlag der Bauhaus-Universität, 2008).

¹⁸ Krisztina Passuth, "Hungarians at the Bauhaus," review of *From Art to Life: Hungarians at the Bauhaus*, exhibition held at the Janos Pannonius Museum, Pécs and Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin, *Hungarian Quarterly* 51, no. 200 (December 1, 2010): 106–115; Éva R. Bajkay ed., *Von Kunst Zu Leben: Die Ungarn Am Bauhaus*, (Pécs, Hungary: Landesmuseum des Komitates Baranya,

of school in 1923 “betrays the influence of avant-gardes outside the Bauhaus: the double impact of de Stijl and Constructivism.” She also noted that Moholy-Nagy’s paintings paved, “the way for the radical integration of painting and architecture.”¹⁹ This chapter will go beyond detection and will examine these projects in their own right and with a fresh critical eye. The projects are identified, not as de Stijl or Constructivism derivatives but as a diverse collection of Bauhaus wall paintings. They illustrate a workshop moving away from decoration and toward the development of wall color schemes and the maturity of Bauhaus wall painters’ theories on the integration color and architecture.

While van Doesburg and Moholy-Nagy are common explanations for the changes in the overall direction of the school and wall painting workshop, it is crucial to examine Kandinsky’s impact as Master of Form. What were his theories on wall painting and the integration of paint and color in architecture in the 1920s? How do these related to the Bauhaus? Kandinsky has usually been discussed only in terms of his color course, color theories, and classroom exercises.²⁰ Clark Poling’s discussion of the artist’s teaching in the wall painting workshop is more thorough than most, although much of it is focused on the master’s color theory and analytic drawing.²¹ Wick discussed Kandinsky’s pedagogy in his book *Teaching at the Bauhaus*,

2010); Éva R. Bajkay, “Hungarians at the Bauhaus,” in *Beyond Art: A Third Culture: A Comparative Study in Cultures, Art and Science in Twentieth Century Austria and Hungary*, ed. Peter Weibel (New York: SpringerWienNewYork, 2005), 71–77; Eva Bajkay-Rosch, “Die KURI-Gruppe,” in *Wechselwirkungen: Ungarische Avantgarde in der Weimarer Republik*, ed. Hubertus Gassner (Marburg: Jonas, 1986), 260–266. This topic was also explored in the “Hungary and the Bauhaus” symposium at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, held on November 20, 2009.

¹⁹ Leah Dickerman, “Bauhaus Fundamentals,” in *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 19–20.

²⁰ For example see: Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 66–68.

²¹ Clark V. Poling, *Kandinsky’s Teaching at the Bauhaus: Color Theory and Analytical Drawing* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986). Poling gave Kandinsky credit for his substantial influence on wall painting at the school, and discussed his output starting with the Jury-Free wall paintings and

but like most scholars he focused on Kandinsky's teaching of color, form, and drawing, and on his book *Point and Line to Plane* (1926), not on his wall painting theories. Kandinsky's famous questionnaire—in which he asked all Bauhaus students to match up a triangle, square, and circle with the colors yellow, red, and blue—is often a focus for discussion, but these have tended to simplify Kandinsky's theories and generalize his impact on the students. Kandinsky's 1922 Jury-Free wall paintings, a set of eight paintings commissioned by the Jury-Free Art Exhibition in Berlin, are rarely discussed in Bauhaus literature or in relationship to the wall painting workshop.²² Most often they are not analyzed or discussed in terms of their relationship to the architectural space of the installation. For example, Sabine Thümmler illustrated the many paintings in the work with one image, the sketch of the only large wall without a doorway, which as a result minimized the fact that these paintings were created in conjunction with the architecture.²³

Some recent texts have begun this examination of Kandinsky, including the 2013 Neue Galerie exhibition and catalogue *Vasily Kandinsky: From Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910–1925*, which included essays focused on his dedication to the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.²⁴ The reconstructions of the Jury-Free wall paintings were discussed by Christian Derouet in

continuing up to the paintings in his Master's House in Dessau. Poling's text is dated, however, and does not account for more recent research and newly discovered photographs, nor does it examine student works at length.

²² Christine Mehring, "Vasily Kandinsky, Designs for Wall Paintings, 1922," in *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 122.

²³ Sabine Thümmler, "The Wall Painting Workshop," in *Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler, Peter Feierabend, and Ute Ackermann (Cologne: Könemann, 2000), 452–61.

²⁴ Jill Lloyd, ed., *Vasily Kandinsky: From Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910–1925* (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013).

conjunction with their temporary installation at the Neue Galerie in New York.²⁵ Christine Mehring examined Kandinsky's original designs for the 1922 wall paintings in the 2009 Museum of Modern Art catalogue *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*.²⁶ Angela Lampe's 2014 essay on the Jury-Free paintings provided an interesting discussion of the context, criticism, and contrast of Kandinsky's painting, but contained little mention of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop.²⁷ Other than these very recent essays, these works are rarely discussed in the vast literature on Kandinsky.²⁸

Gauging Kandinsky's impact on the wall painting students is not as simple or straightforward as considering either the questionnaire or his Jury-Free wall paintings. Scholars from the 1980s often assumed that Kandinsky would have promoted a wall painting style that resembled his own easel paintings. Wick viewed the works of Kandinsky's student as "free, abstract compositions applied to the building" and not, unfortunately, integrated with the architecture.²⁹ Other scholars repeatedly misread and neglected the student projects. Frank Whitford summarized this view point when he wrote, "To judge from photographs, Kandinsky's work in the mural-painting workshop consisted largely of translating the forms and colours of his own easel paintings on to monumental scale."³⁰ This reading of Kandinsky, and the wall paintings of the Bauhaus, is mistaken, as this chapter will discuss. His own wall paintings, and

²⁵ Christian Derouet, "The Juryfreie Murals," in *Vasily Kandinsky: From Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910-1925*, ed. Jill Lloyd (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013), 105–18.

²⁶ Mehring, "Vasily Kandinsky, Designs for Wall Paintings, 1922."

²⁷ Angela Lampe, "The 'Juryfreie' Murals: An Ambivalent Synthesis," in *Kandinsky: A Retrospective* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2014), 99–115.

²⁸ The wall painting sketches were published for the first time in Will Grohmann, *Wassily Kandinsky: Life and Work* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1958). They are not included in the catalogue raisonné of oil paintings by James N. Roethe and Jean K. Benjamin, *Kandinsky: Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil-Paintings* (London: Sotheby Publications, 1982).

²⁹ Rainer Wick, "Wassily Kandinsky," in *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, trans. Stephen Mason (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 195–96.

³⁰ Frank Whitford, *Bauhaus* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 99.

most of the student works for the exhibition were becoming increasingly sensitive to the architectural spaces. As I discuss below, Kandinsky was not interested in just plastering his easel paintings onto the wall. He wanted, dreamed of, painting and architecture as equals in the creation of monumental art. By the end of Kandinsky's tenure in the workshop, Bauhaus wall painters were creating wall color schemes designed for specific architectural demands.

Two documents from Kandinsky's tenure in the workshop provide insight into his leadership and will be discussed in this chapter. Wick wrote that Kandinsky's 1924 memo on wall painting was "strangely undefined and remote from the discussions of the day," like those of de Stijl and Bruno Taut concerning color and architecture.³¹ Kandinsky's 1924 memo may have been vague on the specifics of student's lessons and exact arrangements of colors on the wall, but it attests a theoretical foundation for the workshop, which resulted in wall paintings produced for the exhibition and after. Another document, a short note by Kandinsky defining the different types of wall paintings in the 1923 exhibition, is mentioned in only a few sources.³² This document reveals Kandinsky's active contribution to the planning of the wall painting workshop's projects for the exhibition. Other primary documents reveal the leadership of the new Master of Craft, Bebernis, who was hired just as the projects for the 1923 exhibition were mobilizing. Virtually nothing has been written on Bebernis; only a short biography of his life

³¹ Wick, "Wassily Kandinsky," 195–96. Wick also believed that under Kandinsky the workshop created little, mitigating the many projects of 1923. The Bauhaus approach to the integration of color with architecture was definitely different than that of de Stijl or Taut, but this does not diminish its complexity.

³² Wassily Kandinsky, "Wandmalerei: Bauhaus Ausstellung Zweiseitiges Handschriftliches," June 1923, Inv. N. 1020, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin. This note is quoted at length in a few German language sources such as Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung"; and Christian Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Experiment Bauhaus: Das Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin (West) zu Gast im Bauhaus Dessau*, ed. Peter Hahn, Magdalena Droste, and Jeannine Fiedler (Berlin: Kupfergraben Verlagsgesellschaft, 1988), 282–85.

and career published in 2013 provide hints at his expertise in wall painting techniques and management skills.³³

These documents as well as the student works photographed and illustrated in the 1923 exhibition catalogue allow a more thorough examination of the workshop of that period. In this one exhibition, Bauhaus wall paintings altered space and emphasized form, investigated different materials and techniques, and experimented with compositions and surface treatments, just as Kandinsky called for nine months later in his 1924 memo. Kandinsky's seemingly imprecise description of the workshop becomes tangible when understood in conjunction with the known student work. It is time for a revision of the common dismissive assumptions about Kandinsky. Wick and other scholars' reliance on, and continual reference to, de Stijl or Bruno Taut's theories of the integration of color and architecture shortchange Kandinsky's impact and the Bauhaus's particular approach to painting on the walls. A few of the wall painting workshop's important contributions to exhibition projects have been the subjects of focused scholarship. Coinciding with its inclusion as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1996, the reconstruction and renovation of the Haus am Horn has generated research into its wall paintings.³⁴ Barbara Happe's short essay "Farbigkeit" in *Rekonstruktion einer Utopie: Haus am Horn* discussed the discovery of original layers of paints on the walls of the building, the difficulty of reconstructing the original color scheme, and the decisions that were made in restoring it as closely as possible

³³ Ronny Schüler, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Die Handwerksmeister am Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar* (Weimar: Bauhaus University Press, 2013), 85–92.

³⁴ See Thomas Wurzel, *Das Haus "Am Horn": Denkmalpflegerische Sanierung und Zukunft des Weltkulturerbes der UNESCO in Weimar* (Weimar: Freundeskreis der Bauhaus-Universität, 1999); Bernd Rudolf, ed., *Rekonstruktion einer Utopie: Haus am Horn* (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2000).

to its 1923 state.³⁵ Happe focused, in particular, on the contribution of student Alfred Arndt. Her insight into the reconstructed color scheme of the Haus am Horn extended from her own experience of owning, renovating, and documenting the reconstruction of the Haus Auerbach of 1924, discussed in the next chapter. The renovation of Adolf Meyer’s living room from 1923 or early 1924 is the subject of an essay by Bauhaus Museum in Weimar curator Michael Siebenbrodt.³⁶ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler and Gerhard Oschmann’s book *Gropius-Zimmer* discussed the history and renovation of Walter Gropius’s office.³⁷ Both “Der Wohnraum Adolf Meyers” and *Gropius-Zimmer* included sections on wall painting designs and discussed in detail the renovation of these spaces. These German sources provide an insight into these specific projects, before and after the exhibition, and are a foundation for my own discussion of the overall workshop output in 1923.

The common assumptions about wall paintings of this period will be questioned as I re-imagine the spatial and color effects of the known works, without putting too much focus on well-documented and easily reimagined projects or designs. Kandinsky’s 1922 arrival, his Jury-Free wall paintings, his theories of monumental art, and his synthesis of the arts provide a foundation for a discussion of Kandinsky’s tenure as Master of Form. Since his students transformed wall painting from pictorial murals into architecture-oriented color schemes, an analysis of the known wall paintings for the 1923 exhibition is necessary—from the experimental student works on the walls of the workshop studio room to the cooperative projects

³⁵ Barbara Happe, “Farbigkeit,” in *Rekonstruktion einer Utopie: Haus am Horn*, ed. Bernd Rudolf (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität, 2000), 36–46.

³⁶ Michael Siebenbrodt, “Der Wohnraum Adolf Meyers in Weimar: Ein Gesamtkunstwerk mit Wandbildern von Oskar Schlemmer und Werner Gilles im Kontext der Bauhaus-Ausstellung 1923,” in *Klassik und Avantgarde: Das Bauhaus in Weimar 1919–1925*, ed. Hellmuth T. Seemann and Thorsten Valk (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), 203–23.

³⁷ *Ibid.*; Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*.

of the Haus am Horn and Gropius's office. By 1924 Kandinsky's students, like Alfred Arndt, were beginning to use and develop wall color schemes that both went along with architectural form and also altered and transformed the spaces.

For almost a year, the 1923 exhibition was the focus of the work of all the students and masters of the Bauhaus. Gropius declared a state of emergency in fall 1922: priority number one was getting ready for this important exhibition.³⁸ Bauhaus scholar Éva Forgács has argued that Gropius was using the exhibition to hold the Bauhaus together, to unite internal factions, and to alleviate external political pressures.³⁹ Discussion of the varied and eclectic works for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition must begin with this preparatory period, from summer 1922 to the opening of the exhibition. With Kandinsky's appointment as Master of Form for wall painting in summer 1922, the workshop underwent a significant shift of leadership and approach. Gropius may have added Kandinsky to the faculty as a way to counter the growing impact of van Doesburg and de Stijl in Weimar.⁴⁰ Although Schlemmer was no longer directly involved in the workshop's activities, because of his role on the exhibition planning committee and his wall painting designs for the exhibition, executed with the help of students, his impact on the wall painting workshop was not quite over.⁴¹ Kandinsky immediately brought new direction and focus to the workshop, a new project for the students to work on in the wake of the debacle of the Jena Municipal Theater project, discussed in the previous chapter. The works created by the workshop's students for the exhibition reflected his new presence.

³⁸ Volker Wahl, ed., *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar 1919 bis 1925* (Weimar: Böhlau, 2001), 237–241.

³⁹ Éva Forgács, "Reinventing the Bauhaus: The 1923 Exhibition as a Turning Point in the Direction of the School," in *Bauhaus: Art as Life*, ed. Juliette Desorgues (London: Koenig Books, 2012), 78–82.

⁴⁰ Wick, "Wassily Kandinsky," 194.

⁴¹ Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 239.

In his first months at the Bauhaus, Kandinsky was commissioned by the organizers of the *Juryfreie Kunstschau* (Jury-Free Art Exhibition) to create a whole room of wall paintings for an imagined future museum of modern art. The Jury-Free wall paintings were the first after Kandinsky's appointment at the Bauhaus, but they were not his first or only example of uniting painting and architecture. For Kandinsky, the connection of painting and architecture and the synthesis of the arts was a longstanding interest, one that he had developed throughout his artistic career and one that would continue to the end of his life. He wrote to Will Grohmann in 1924 that the "synthetic work in space, therefore together with the building, is my old dream."⁴² He had been interested in the arts coming together in what some would call the *Gesamtkunstwerk* and integration of art into everyday life since his earliest days in Munich. Scholars have even traced this interest back to his days as a student at the University of Moscow and an ethnographic trip he took in summer 1889 to a remote area of Russia.⁴³ As Christopher Short has discussed in his book *The Art Theory of Wassily Kandinsky, 1909–1928: The Quest for Synthesis*, his synthesis was more than a unification of the visual arts, it was also based on spiritualism; synesthesia; the integration of music, color, and sound; and a search for a grammar of painting.⁴⁴ Kandinsky's 1911-12 *On the Spiritual in Art* began his theoretical writing on this topic and continued through to his 1926 Bauhaus book *Point and Line to Plane*.

⁴² "synthetische Arbeit im Raum, also mit dem Bau zusammen, ist mein alter Traum," Kandinsky to Grohmann (1924), quoted in Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," 283.

⁴³ Rose-Carol Washton Long, "Constructing the Total Work of Art: Painting and the Public," in *Vasily Kandinsky: From Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910–1925*, ed. Jill Lloyd (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013), 33–47; Clark V. Poling, ed., *Kandinsky: Russian and Bauhaus Years, 1915–1933* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1983); Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky and Old Russia: The Artist as Ethnographer and Shaman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

⁴⁴ Christopher Short, *The Art Theory of Wassily Kandinsky, 1909–1928: The Quest for Synthesis* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010).

When Kandinsky arrived in Moscow during the upheaval of World War I and the Russian Revolution, he resumed his exploration of and theorization on the possibility of painting's integration with architecture, and the arts uniting together, as he became involved in the many different Soviet art organizations. Kandinsky had been aware of artistic developments in Russia, and his time there after the revolution was no exception.⁴⁵ As John E. Bowlt and Nicoletta Misler have discussed, the full effect of his time in the Soviet Union has not been fully explored. His participation in Soviet institutions not only helped to further develop his earlier interest and theories but also prepared him for his teaching at the Bauhaus. For example, he began to give more attention to psychological concerns of the arts.⁴⁶ In 1920 Kandinsky proposed a program for the Soviet Institute of Artistic Culture (INKhUK).⁴⁷ In it he described his teaching method and the process of research into the related fields of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Through this research the ultimate goal would be to create a monumental art. "In the narrow sense of the word, monumental art derives from the united means of expression of the three arts: painting, sculpture, and architecture."⁴⁸ He went on to explain that during the nineteenth century the collaboration of the three arts was destroyed and lost:

A lifeless memento was all that remained. . . Painting was palmed off with this or that facade, staircases in vestibules, ceilings, and to some extent, wall or rooms. The artist covered them with whatever entered his head. Unfortunately, it never entered his head that his work should retain some organic connection with the

⁴⁵ John E. Bowlt, "Vasilii Kandinsky: The Russian Connection," in *The Life of Vasilii Kandinsky in Russian Art: A Study of "On the Spiritual in Art,"* ed. Rose-Carol Washton Long and John E. Bowlt, (Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1980), 1–41.

⁴⁶ John E. Bowlt and Nicoletta Misler, "Unchartered Territory: Vasilii Kandinsky and the Soviet Union," *Experiment* 8 (2002): 15–21.

⁴⁷ Wassily Kandinsky, "Program for the Institute of Artistic Culture" (1920), in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth Clement Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 455–72.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 461–62.

architect's or sculptor's work. The three artists shared only one inner standpoint: that the artist could act together in a single work never occurred to any of them.⁴⁹

This was the situation that Kandinsky wanted to fix with his synthesis of the arts: to bring the major arts, including theater, poetry and music together for this new monumental art.

But Kandinsky also perceived a risk or danger when these different arts were brought together. He explained, "This dead architecture of ours has the habit of dominating painting and sculpture (which, in their subservience, play an pathetic role), even though it has no prerogative to do so. But when the renaissance occurs, architecture will become an equal member of the three arts in monumental creation."⁵⁰ Kandinsky understood that tendency of architecture to take over a dominant role in this synthesis, or as an architect might phrase it, architecture as the leader of the arts. Conversely, he also described the opposite case whereby the artist created his or her vision regardless of the architecture. For Kandinsky, the domination of one discipline over the other was problematic for any synthesis of the arts.

In 1920, still in the Soviet Union, Kandinsky had particularly high hopes for the Bauhaus to resolve some of the conflicts between painting and architecture. In the article "Artistic Life" in the Soviet journal *Khudozhestvennaia Zhizn*, he discussed the spread of like-minded projects such as the Weimar Bauhaus:

This synthetic unity has also been pursued, as far as I am aware, at the new Weimar Academy—not merely mechanically, as in our art schools, but organically: every student is obliged to study all three arts. Artists returning from Germany have told me that the Weimar Academy regards as inadmissible that state of affairs whereby an architect erects a building, a sculpture adorns it with his embellishments, and a painter is given this or that surface for his paintings, with no connection whatever to the general plan of the edifice. All three artists

⁴⁹ Ibid., 462. Kandinsky's plan was not accepted by the more radical, younger artists and was never implemented in the Soviet Union.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 463.

have to create the plan of the edifice, which fuses into one whole the elements of all three arts. The head of this academy is the architect Walter Gropius.⁵¹

Kandinsky's belief in the Bauhaus project is perhaps a credit to Gropius's ability to promote the utopian tenets of his school. It also demonstrates his longing for international support, the fervor of his utopian ideals, and his remoteness from the actual events of the school. While there is little evidence that this type of fusion really existed at the Bauhaus (or anywhere), in 1920 Kandinsky believed it was possible. Later, when he discussed the integration and mutual relationship of color and form in the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition catalogue and in his 1924 memo on the wall painting workshop, he continued to believe that the three arts could come together.

Kandinsky left the Soviet Union for Germany in the winter 1921. Despite the resistance and disagreements he experienced in the Soviet Union with younger more radical artists and the rejection of his school program, his utopian dream of a synthesis of the arts was still flourishing. His utopian fever was at a peak when he arrived in Weimar in summer 1922.⁵² He was eager to accomplish his "great synthesis," because now at the Bauhaus he had the freedom to implement his evolving teaching methods and his theories of point, line, plane, color, and form.

Jury-Free Wall Paintings

It was in this hopeful moment that Kandinsky designed the large wall paintings for the "Jury Free Art Show" in Berlin. The so-called Jury-Free wall paintings are critical to understanding Kandinsky and Bauhaus wall painting for a number of reasons. They are the only

⁵¹ Wassily Kandinsky, "Artistic Life in Russia (1920), Published in *Khudozhestvennaia Zhizn*," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth Clement Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 450.

⁵² His mood at this time is demonstrated in Wassily Kandinsky, "Foreword to the Catalogue of the First International Art Exhibition, Düsseldorf (1922)," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth Clement Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 478–79.

concrete example or demonstration of his instruction in the wall painting workshop over the course of his leadership from 1922 to 1925. Although there is much evidence and record of Kandinsky's teaching methods in color theory and other topics in the foundation courses, his instruction to the wall painting workshop is largely speculative. But as Christine Mehring argued the Jury-Free wall paintings went to the core of the artists' ambition for the wall painting workshop and for painting at the Bauhaus.⁵³ The works were among the first he produced in Weimar. These paintings as well as his prints in the *Kleinen Welten*, (Small Worlds) series introduced the students, faculty, and the greater German public to the postwar Kandinsky. In addition, the paintings provided Kandinsky with the rare opportunity to work towards a synthesis of the arts.⁵⁴ Lastly, the paintings' sensitivity to space and the viewer's movement related to his contemporary theories as well as his student's wall paintings.

The Jury-Free wall paintings were an experiment with an immersive *Gesamtkunstwerk* environment, in which color and form along with space shaped viewers' movements and experiences. For Kandinsky, as well as his students, the project was a useful exercise in shaping the physical environment through painting. The wall paintings were designed for this specific temporary space and not for a permanent environment, and this context influenced their content and form. The project provided the students with technical experience and a lesson in the creative forces of composition and color, as well as a demonstration of the ways in which architectural space and structure must inform design. As Kandinsky's later 1924 memo would describe, this project involved altering color and transforming a given form. Although the Jury-Free project did not foreshadow a future student wall painting style, the power of works to

⁵³ Mehring, "Vasily Kandinsky, Designs for Wall Paintings, 1922," 127.

⁵⁴ Other attempts at wall painting, the Edwin Campbell murals in 1914 and the later 1931 mosaics for a music room, are the only others examples of Kandinsky expanding his compositions into architectural space.

dissolve and transform the physical environment of architecture was instructive for future integrations of color and paint in architecture.

The Jury-Free paintings were installed in an octagonal room in the Crystal Palace of the Landesausstellung in Berlin in fall 1922. The paintings were large, with an estimated height of fourteen feet, the large panels twenty-three feet wide and the shorter panels five feet wide. The future museum envisioned to house these works was never realized and the paintings have not survived. They are known today through a set of preliminary gouache sketches (henceforth identified as designs *A–E* and small panels 1–4), and documentary photographs.⁵⁵ Descriptions in the contemporary press and in other written material, and two reconstructions of Kandinsky's paintings help to reconstruct a sense of the installation. A full-scale reconstruction of the murals was completed in 1977 at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and a smaller reconstruction was installed in the Neue Galerie in New York in 2013. Although flawed recreations of the original works and installation, both are helpful.

The existing literature and the reconstructions have concentrated almost exclusively on the extant gouache sketches. As has been extensively demonstrated in studies on Kandinsky's prewar paintings, his sketches are often linked to final works, but they are not exact replicas. The sketches are preparatory and show Kandinsky working through themes, motifs, and ideas. As Rose-Carol Washton Long has long argued in her discussion of the development of abstraction from around 1914, the final works were often veiled and more abstracted than the sketches.⁵⁶ The existing photographs of Jury-Free wall paintings confirm the modifications and refinements

⁵⁵ Four photographs show the works in fabrication at the Bauhaus, another is a cropped photograph of one wall published in *Cahiers d'Art* and the last one depicts three paintings on the walls as installed at the exhibition.

⁵⁶ For example: Rose-Carol Washton Long, *Kandinsky, the Development of an Abstract Style* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1980).

in the final works. The installation photograph of the corner of the room reveals a number of noticeable changes between the sketches and final paintings (figure 2.11). The lines and shapes became crisper, and above and to the left of the doorway a spiky diagonal form is larger and more pronounced in the final in-situ paintings. The reconstructions do not account for these adjustments: the sketches were primarily copied and enlarged by the restorers to a monumental scale. In addition, the 1977 restorers were unaware of an in-situ photograph from Herbert Bayer's archive, the lack of which led to a random arrangement and misordering of the panels in the room.⁵⁷ Therefore one must question these restorations as much as rely on them. While the Jury-Free compositions, by all accounts, were singularly Kandinsky's design, his new students executed the paintings, enlarging the compositions onto large sections of canvas. The process was captured in four extant photographs, which show the large canvas panels on the floor of the Bauhaus auditorium (figures 2.2–2.5).⁵⁸ Art historian Hans Hildebrandt might have taken the photographs,⁵⁹ which would have related to the publication of a massive book *Wandmalerei, ihr Wesen und ihre Gesetze* (Wall Painting, its Nature and its Laws) in 1920.⁶⁰

All four of these in-process photographs provide useful information about the original works. One shows Kandinsky kneeling on the ground working on a large canvas, which corresponds to gouache sketch B, with three students, two young men and one young woman (figure 2.2). On the floor closer to the camera, one can see part of the top of panel C. In a very

⁵⁷ Derouet, "The Juryfreie Murals," 115.

⁵⁸ Herbert Bayer later recalled that the students are painting with casein paint. Bayer is quoted in *Ibid.*, 114.

⁵⁹ Derouet mentioned an inscription on the back of one of the photographs: "Kandinsky's students painting a reception room for the Juryfreie Ausstellung in Berlin in 1922. For a planned museum of modern art/I took it on October 25, 1923, in Weimar/ Prof Dr. N. von Hildebrandt." Quoted in *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶⁰ Hildebrandt, *Wandmalerei*. Hildebrandt was from Stuttgart, as was Oskar Schlemmer, his long time friend and fellow follower of Adolf Hölzel. This connection was discussed in chapter one.

similar view in a second photograph the same panel is being worked on by the same three students, and a fourth male student or Kandinsky stands behind at a table of painting supplies, mixing or preparing materials (figure 2.4). Both of these photographs indicate that panels B and C were painted on a black or a very dark background.⁶¹ The photograph also demonstrates the high contrast of the color scheme, as the white forms stand out against the dark base color.

Two other photographs depict a different angle and a different moment in the painting process (figures 2.3 and 2.5). In these images, two of the same students, a man and woman, paint two of the small corner sections. Beyond these kneeling and painting students, Oskar Schlemmer, another man (perhaps Kandinsky), and two other students look on.⁶² Schlemmer, in particular, seems very interested in the paintings, smiling but perhaps also posing for the camera with his arms crossed in one photo and his hand on his hips and gazing directly at the camera in the other. On the far left, hanging on the wall of the auditorium, are three of the preliminary gouaches, A, B, and a portion of D. As in the other photographs, the panels on the floor have black backgrounds and the students are kneeling, hunched over the works. The female student even has bare feet, protecting the surface of the paintings from scuffmarks.⁶³ Clearly these students are gaining practical experience in transferring and enlarging compositions from small preliminary sketches onto a very large canvas. The outlines of the composition have already been transferred onto the canvas and the students are filling them in. Overall, these photographs reveal

⁶¹ While panel B seems to be made of one piece of canvas, a seam can be seen in panel C.

⁶² Derouet, "The Juryfreie Murals," 105.

⁶³ The identity of the students is difficult to determine although Derouet suggested that the young man is Herbert Bayer. By my calculations the female student is plausibly Lena Wulff or Dörte Helm. By summer 1922, there were only three women left in the workshop; most other women at the Bauhaus had been funneled into the weaving workshop. Dörte Helm, the most successful woman from the workshop, had just passed her journeyman's exam in spring 1922 and often worked for Gropius's private architectural practice, which, as will be discussed below, caused a great deal of controversy in fall 1922.

that Kandinsky's students worked alongside their master, learning his technique and becoming immersed in his compositions.

Unlike the photographs, the five gouache-on-paper sketches provide a sense of the whole composition and the different motifs and forms, as well as provide a clue to the colors of the final works (figures 2.6–2.10).⁶⁴ A thorough description of each sketch and each wall would be overwhelming and burdensome. However, it is important to understand the general compositions and dynamics of the large wall panels in order to grasp their relationships and shared characteristics. Sketches A and B contain many of the common compositional elements. Wall A included a large doorway in the center and in the sketch, on the left side of the door, colorful dots filled a large circle and a cluster of diagonal and organic curved lines in many colors completed the composition. Thin green curving lines crisscross above the doorway and seem to crown it like a spiked Mohawk. Parallel to the floor and above the door three horizontal bands—yellow, blue, and pink—run from the left to the right, linking the left and right sides of the wall. The right side is less full than the left. Blue, red, and yellow dots are clustered in a rough triangular form with curving white lines interspersed, vertical and diagonal pieces crossing and curving upward.

Sketch B shows the only large wall free of doorways, allowing for a large continuous surface. In it, Kandinsky created two distinct compositional clusters, one on the left and one on the right. Both are explosions of free-formed shapes and lines, which Kandinsky scholar Clark

⁶⁴ The four large sketches (A, B, C, and D), which are painted on sheets of black or brown paper, each represent a large wall. The four much smaller wall sections are represented on a single sheet of black paper (F). They all measure 34.7 x 60 cm. The four smaller wall sections on sketch F will be referred to as 1 through 4 going from left to right.

Poling inaccurately described as reminiscent of his pre-World War I expressionistic forms.⁶⁵

This wall has hardly a straight line or geometric shape throughout, and is the most dynamic and pulsating of all the wall paintings in the space.⁶⁶

One of the surviving installation photographs depicts the corner of the octagonal room, and the intersection of panels C and D and small panel 3, confirming the arrangement of the paintings in the room (figure 2.11). It is only with these panels that an in-situ photograph provides a hint at connections between the panels.⁶⁷ Given the available information one can never be certain about the exact arrangement that Kandinsky intended, a total space where each wall played a role in relationship to its neighbor. Many of the design elements are reiterated throughout, and repetition served to unite the various sections. The three colored bands—pink, blue, and yellow—in panel A are repeated in panel D, but they shift from horizontal to diagonal, emerging from the corner formed by the edge of the door and seemingly shooting back into space. Likewise, white squares of similar size appear in three of the four large panels and in two of the four smaller ones. The white band in the sketches and squares, as well as the many white lines and forms, pop against the black background. According to a description of the work by the American artist and art patron Katherine Dreier, these white squares complement the black and white marble floor of the room.⁶⁸ The composition has many more repeated forms, including

⁶⁵ Clark V. Poling, ed., *Kandinsky: Russian and Bauhaus Years, 1915–1933*. (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1983), 38.

⁶⁶ In comparison with the sketch, the photograph of this panel reproduced in the *Cahiers d'Art* monograph on Kandinsky illustrates the more crisp and refined character of the final work.

⁶⁷ This installation photograph was unknown at the time of the 1977 reconstructions and in the reconstruction the arrangement of the panels was apparently arbitrary. In it small panel 2 was placed in between panel C and D instead of small panel 3. Surprisingly the reconstruction from 2013 at the Neue Gallerie continues the apparent miss-arrangement of the panels.

⁶⁸ Katherine S. Dreier, *Kandinsky* (New York: Société Anonyme, 1923), 3. Dreier was the only commentator to describe the tile floor. In the only existing photograph of the installation, the

multi-colored circular shapes in five of eight panels. In panels C and D and small panel 3, groupings of white horizontals line up perfectly, suggesting sheet music. All of these similar forms must have brought the compositions into relationship with each other, linking the paintings across the space of the room, and even perhaps creating a progression as one moved through the space.

In addition to relating all the compositions to one another and creating one unified work, Kandinsky also took the architectural features of the room into account, most clearly the doorways.⁶⁹ In panel A, the doorway acts as component of the composition: on the bottom right of the door a yellow triangle fits into the corner, accentuating this right angle, like an architect's triangle, and above the door the yellow triangle seems to extend to a second point. It is as if the door was cutting through an existing triangular shape. It is unclear, however, if Kandinsky arranged the forms to highlight and accentuate the door or if he just cut a door through an already complete composition. But in panel D, to the right of the door the yellow, blue, and pink bands accentuate the corner of the door, the doorway initiating the painting's composition. Just as Kandinsky described in his INKhUK program of 1920, here he took the existing architecture into account when developing the paintings. These doorways bisected and shaped his compositions.

Despite my assertion that Kandinsky formed his compositions using the doorways as an active element, for most scholars the degree that Kandinsky took the architecture of the room into account is somewhat uncertain. Mehring explained that Kandinsky's designs did not submit or succumb to the space, suggesting that art was more important than design, and that it would have been disadvantageous or undesirable for Kandinsky's composition to change or defer to the

floor appears solid gray; therefore, she might be describing the floors of the adjacent rooms to Kandinsky's entrance hall.

⁶⁹ The doorways in panels A, C and D interrupted the flat wall plane. Only large panel B, by far the most complex and dynamic, does not have the intrusion of a door.

architecture.⁷⁰ Lampe described the work as not subjugating to architecture but instead acting like a gigantic panel painting.⁷¹ Wick lamented that Kandinsky did not take into consideration the architecture, believing that the compositions are too free or unrelated to the building.⁷² It could indeed be argued that the wall paintings distracted from the architecture and did not coalesce into a monumental work. This was, however, a temporary exhibition space, and while in the future the paintings might have been incorporated into a new museum of modern art, it was not intended as a permanent installation. While it seems that the walls might dissolve and the paintings would become immersive, so that the viewer is lost in the space, Kandinsky was creating a work for a large art exhibition, where people would walk in and out of the space, where they were aware of the many other art works all around them. The architecture was temporary, not a statement of *Neue Bauen* or a synthetic integration of the architect and painter.

Kandinsky was concerned with the viewer's movement around the space and the energy through diagonals and lines of force from left to right. He wrote in his INKhUK program, "It is essential to establish a link between the movement of lines and the movement of the human body (of the whole and of its individual parts)—to translate line into the movement of the body and the movement of the body into line."⁷³ Kandinsky was striving for a balance, not only by using and thinking about the architecture and the use of the space, but also by adhering to his own artistic sensibility. This acknowledgement and appreciation for the architecture—for the use of the space and the movement of the viewer—was something Kandinsky must have expressed to his students as they worked alongside their master.

⁷⁰ Mehring, "Vasily Kandinsky, Designs for Wall Paintings, 1922," 127.

⁷¹ Lampe, "The 'Juryfreie' Murals," 102.

⁷² Wick, "Wassily Kandinsky," 196.

⁷³ Kandinsky, "Program for the Institute of Artistic Culture," 459.

These interests and this situation were similar, in many ways, to the wall paintings in the studio room of the wall painting workshop, which was created for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition. The studio room, like that of the Jury-Free Art Exhibition, was used for temporary installations and demonstrations of Bauhaus wall paintings. In these exhibition paintings, the students included and manipulated the architectural features of the space. It is clear in all the writings discussed above that Kandinsky did not believe that in a synthetic work the artist should cover the walls “with whatever entered his head.”⁷⁴

A number of Kandinsky paintings from around this time echo many of the forms of the Jury-Free works. In his discussion of the 1977 reconstruction of the murals, Christian Derouet cited Kandinsky’s *Composition VIII* (1920), later renamed *Spitzes Schweben*, as an important comparison for the Jury-Free wall paintings. *Spitzes Schweben* was lost when it returned to the USSR in the 1930s. The *Kleine Welten* (Small Worlds) prints Kandinsky made in Weimar in fall 1922 at the Bauhaus (figure 2.13) or perhaps the painting *White Cross*, 1922 (figure 2.1) make for better comparison. The print series includes many forms similar to those in the Jury-Free paintings: the black-and-white checkerboards, three colored bands that stretch back into imagined space, circles with intersecting diagonals, many wavy lines and spiky forms, and white horizontal lines as in panels C and D and small panel 3. As Karen Koehler has discussed, these *Kleine Welten* prints are related to Kandinsky’s interest in maps, architecture, and urban planning in Moscow and the social and political changes he experienced there.⁷⁵ She interpreted the cross-hatched and parallel lines in some of the *Kleine Welten* prints as references to railroad tracks, evoking contemporary plans for Moscow’s redevelopment. Similar sets of parallel and crossing

⁷⁴ Ibid., 462.

⁷⁵ Karen Koehler, “Kandinsky’s ‘Kleine Welten’ and Utopian City Plans,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57, no. 4 (1998): 432–47.

lines are in panels A and C of the *Jury Free* wall paintings, cutting across the doorway in panel C and extending vertically or perhaps back into space in panel A. Koehler explained that Kandinsky was not directly making maps.

His “small worlds” are clearly meant to represent cosmic regions. The shifting between two- and three-dimensional space and the equivocating depictions of aerial and frontal perspective in the *Kleine Welten* prints are reminiscent of medieval city plans and depictions of the city of heaven. The sense of being in both a physical and a metaphysical place is enhanced by the sense of unclear space, which draws on a common convention of medieval topographical illustration and depictions of ideal cities.⁷⁶

The shifting sense of perspective and angle from two- to three-dimensions are found often in the *Jury-Free* works. The white checkerboard sections are flattened, planar elements, remaining on the surface of the wall, while the diagonals often push deep into the imagined cosmic space. Panel D includes both of these flattening and depth-creating elements, the flat checkerboard and the three bands projecting back to the white circle, like cosmic worlds, with forms that evoke a city on a hill, imagery common in Kandinsky’s prewar expressionistic works. Perhaps as Long described, his use of perspective in Russia “reinforced his use of space as a metaphor for a utopian world.”⁷⁷ Painted between January and June 1922, the *White Cross*, similarly includes checkerboards, tri-colored bands, circles, and intersecting diagonals on a black background. The *Jury-Free* works, made just after Kandinsky’s return from Russia, right before his *Kleine Welten* prints and after *White Cross*, perhaps share the dream of a utopian cosmic world where artists, painters, sculptors, and architects work together for monumental art.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 437.

⁷⁷ Rose-Carol Washton Long, “Expressionism, Abstraction and the Search for Utopia in Germany,” in *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890–1985*, ed. Maurice Tuchman, Judi Freeman, and Carel Blotkamp (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 214.

Reactions to Kandinsky's wall paintings were mixed. A review in the journal *Das Kunstblatt* described the paintings as looking like black wallpaper and *chinoiserie*, clearly understanding them only as decorative ornament for the room.⁷⁸ In contrast, the enthusiastic account of the exhibition by Katherine Dreier began by providing a sense of the buzz around the installation.⁷⁹ "Berlin was talking about it. About what? Everybody was asking. Why, the new wall decorations which Kandinsky had designed, and his pupils at the Academy at Weimar had executed. Was it true that Kandinsky was at Weimar? Weimar, the town of Goethe, the city of tradition!" At least according to Dreier, the wall paintings were much talked about and Kandinsky's arrival in Weimar was still novel.

I went to see these much-talked about decorations – large black hangings made for the entrance hall of the new Art Building which the group of moderns in Germany hope to erect in Berlin. They were perfectly placed in this octagonal room resembling an entrance hall. They carried you into space, and you could see the black and white marble checkered floor, and the imposing portal through which one would have to come. It was all very complete.⁸⁰

Dreier hints at experiencing a Kandinsky work later in her essay when she described the goal of all his paintings and "the desire to aim at the sensation of permitting the on-looker to enter his pictures, to permit him to walk into them, to disappear within their world. It was only later that he became conscious of the small group to whom this was possible, but to them it is—the wall expands—another world is reached."⁸¹ In his paintings, viewers could be visually

⁷⁸ Willi Wolfradt, "Ausstellungen Berlin: Juryfreie Kunstschau," *Das Kunstblatt: Kraus Reprint* 6, no. 12 (December 1922): 543–44, quoted in Mehring, "Vasily Kandinsky, Designs for Wall Paintings, 1922," 127.

⁷⁹ Dreier, *Kandinsky*. Dreier, a great fan of Kandinsky, wrote about her experience at the Jury Free Art Exhibition and subsequently meeting the artist in Weimar in a short catalogue published in conjunction with Kandinsky's first show in America, at Dreier's exhibition art group the *Société Anonyme*, in New York.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

transported, but in the Jury Free Art Exhibition viewers could physically enter the work. One walked through the room, in and out doorways. In this first large-scale wall painting Kandinsky was experimenting with the potential of this new medium. Could he change people's movement? What would the immersive quality be? Both the Jury-Free wall paintings as well as the *Kleine Welten* prints were some of Kandinsky earliest works at the Bauhaus and were produced using the students and materials of his new school. These were manifestos of his evolving style, declarations to the Bauhaus community of what his art was now like. They were also a part of an evolving and developing experience of Bauhaus wall paintings.

The Schlemmer Brothers Departure

For a Weimar Bauhaus student, working with the famous and critically acclaimed Kandinsky on the *Jury Free* paintings would have been exciting. A new promising phase of the workshop had clearly begun, although numerous problems soon occurred. The source of much of this trouble originated from a project of Gropius's private architectural firm, the Haus Otte, a home built for the Berlin lawyer Fritz Otte in 1921–1922. Dörte Helm, a student, developed a color design for the building. It was not a figurative or pictorial wall painting, but a building color scheme coordinated with Gropius's architecture along the lines of later designs by Alfred Arndt or Hinnerk Scheper.⁸² Beginning at some point in the summer of 1922, disagreements arose between Carl Schlemmer and Gropius, coming to a head on October 5th at the Masters Council meeting. Schlemmer objected to Helm's executing her selected wall painting scheme for

⁸² Scheper, *Colourful!*, 48. The interior of Haus Otte, as described by Renate Scheper, was primarily painted in dark earth tones except for the central hall, which was blue-green and the middle bedroom on the first floor, which had a salmon pink ceiling, grey walls and blue highlights above the closets and niches. The building was restored in the 1980s by Brigitte Boelke.

the Haus Otte.⁸³ He stated that the council had previously agreed that no female Bauhaus students would work on building projects, and that they should only be admitted to the weaving workshop. A series of attacks on Gropius for his management skills and an inappropriate relationship with Helm followed, but the other masters disapproved of Schlemmer's conduct and insinuations and Gropius defended Helm.⁸⁴ As a result, Schlemmer was fired.

Gropius, because of all this turmoil, had again to search for a Master of Craft for the wall painting workshop, something he had been almost constantly doing in the first couple years of the school. At the Masters Council meeting on October 28, Herman Müller, a nephew of Oskar Schlemmer and an advanced workshop student, was temporarily appointed as Master of Craft.⁸⁵ Gropius explained to the painter Edwin Haß that he needed somebody older, who had practical experience and teaching credentials and who was technically well versed, although artistic talent was not required.⁸⁶ Haß responded with the address of wall painter Heinrich Beberniss.⁸⁷ By November 17, Gropius asked Beberniss to join the Bauhaus provisionally as Master of Craft for the wall painting workshop.⁸⁸

⁸³ Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 241–246.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 275.

⁸⁶ Walter Gropius to Erwin Haß, October 30, 1922, Nr.117 Bl.35, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed February 28, 2014, urn:nbn:de:urmel-2ea1afa6-e1ec-469c-8484-94de78a7b3a10.

⁸⁷ Edwin Haß to Walter Gropius, November 1, 1922, Nr.117 Bl.34, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar, accessed February 28, 2014, urn:nbn:de:urmel-2ea1afa6-e1ec-469c-8484-94de78a7b3a10.

⁸⁸ Walter Gropius, "Beberniss Ernennung," November 23, 1922, Nr.114 Bl.14, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar, accessed February 28, 2014, urn:nbn:de:urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20; Walter Gropius to Heinrich Beberniss, November 23, 1922, Nr.114 Bl.13, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar, accessed February 28, 2014, urn:nbn:de:urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

Beberriss was twenty-eight years old when he joined the Bauhaus, after having completed a four-year apprenticeship in painting technique and then studying as an artistic and decorative painter in Halle from 1920 to 1922.⁸⁹ In February 1923 he passed his examination qualifying him to teach;⁹⁰ two months later he signed a permanent contract with the Bauhaus.⁹¹ Beberness was tasked with the technical training of the students in painting methods. He remained at the Bauhaus until the school left Weimar in 1925. The departure of Carl Schlemmer and the addition of Beberness in 1922, was yet another aspect of the shifting and changing wall painting workshop in the months leading to the 1923 exhibition.

Oskar Schlemmer's contributions to the 1923 exhibition (figures 1.26–1.29) are among the most well-known Bauhaus wall paintings. However, his pictorial and figurative murals in the workshop building of the school no longer reflected the direction of the wall painting workshop under Kandinsky and Beberness. Schlemmer, the *former* Master of Form, certainly influenced the students, but his impact was fading, therefore his paintings were discussed in the previous chapter. But another Schlemmer project is briefly included here as further evidence for the future direction of the wall painting towards the development of wall color schemes. In 1923, either before or just after the exhibition, Oskar Schlemmer and Werner Gilles both painted a set of wall paintings in the living room of Adolf Meyer's apartment. Meyer, the architectural partner of Gropius and a master at the Bauhaus, designed the space as a *gesamtkunstswerk*—the paintings on the walls coordinated with the lighting, furniture, and textiles, completing a harmonious space. Today a handful of black-and-white photographs document the original ensemble. Two

⁸⁹ Schüler, *Die Handwerksmeister am Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar*, 90.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ "Heinrich Beberness Vertrag," April 23, 1923, Nr.114 Bl.21-22, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar, accessed February 28, 2014, urn: nbn: de: urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

are wide shots of the space and both show two painted walls, one painted by Schlemmer and one by Gilles, along with the furniture and other interior décor (figures 2.14–2.15). Two other photographs of Schlemmer’s two paintings were shot straight on, and do not include any reference to the room or space. In addition, some sketches and preparatory drawings by Schlemmer have also survived.

While it has been assumed that the paintings were destroyed by Nazi party officials in the 1930s as were the other wall paintings in the Weimar Bauhaus buildings, recent research has uncovered new evidence for these works. In 2006 Michael Siebenbrodt, curator of the Bauhaus Museum in Weimar, discovered fragments of Schlemmer’s paintings still preserved under many layers of wallpaper in the rooms of the apartment, now on 4 Rudolf-Breitschied Strasse in Weimar. Analysis by Ludwig Volkmann of the COREON restoration company in 2008 confirmed that these fragments corresponded to the original works and could be restored in the future.⁹² Siebenbrodt’s subsequent essay on the paintings, “Der Wohnraum Adolf Meyers in Weimar: Ein Gesamtkunstwerk mit Wandbildern von Oskar Schlemmer und Werner Gilles in Kontext der Bauhaus-Ausstellung” (The Living Room of Adolf Meyer in Weimar: A Total Work of Art with Wall Pictures by Oskar Schlemmer and Werner Gilles), provided the only significant analysis of this set of paintings. Siebenbrodt discussed each component of the room: the paintings by both the famous Schlemmer and less well known Gilles, the ceiling light fixture designed by Meyer and executed in the metal workshop, furniture designed by Bauhäusler Erich Dieckmann, and textiles from the Bauhaus weaving workshop. According to him, the living room ensemble was probably produced in the context of the 1923 exhibition, acting as complement to the public Bauhaus projects. While there has been disagreement in Schlemmer

⁹² Siebenbrodt, “Der Wohnraum Adolf Meyers in Weimar.” This planned restoration had not yet been executed as of 2014. Michael Siebenbrodt, e-mail message to author, March 10, 2014

literature on the dating of his paintings, Siebenbrodt argued that they were executed in early 1923, shortly after Gilles paintings were finished in May.⁹³ This timing is important: this total space was being assembled in relationship to the 1923 exhibition, Adolf Meyer was in essence providing a private version of the possibilities of Bauhaus design.

Schlemmer's *Figure with Square between A and O (Alpha and Omega)* and *Head Frieze* and Gilles's *Landscape with Nudes and Horses* and *Nude from the Back with Bird and Deer*, are primarily figurative, easel painting compositions, placed onto the walls of Meyer's apartment. These four main wall paintings have little to do with the direction of the wall painting workshop, its move toward the integration of color and architecture, and the wall color schemes of the Haus am Horn, Gropius's office, and other student work. What is perhaps most relevant to students, and the greatest lesson they could have taken from the design of this space, was not the figurative main scene but the overall color scheme, which united the paintings with the textiles and furniture.

In an undated letter to Hans Hildebrandt, Schlemmer described the room as light purple, with the ceiling red, blue, purple, and crimson, colors that worked with his paintings.⁹⁴ The ceiling light, centered over the table, was composed of layers of mirrored and matte glass.⁹⁵ Most important for this discussion is the ceiling around the light fixture. It was painted in different colors, with different techniques and surface textures, although it is difficult to decipher in the one photograph that depicts it. The shiny and matte surfaces of the light fixture were echoed in the ceiling painting and a frame of color and texture expanded out from the light.

⁹³ Ibid. Schlemmer scholar Karin von Marin dated this work to late 1923 or early 1924, while Wulf Herzogenrath and Alfred Hentzen have argued for an earlier 1923 date.

⁹⁴ Oskar Schlemmer to Hans Hildebrandt, June 16, 1924, quoted in Siebenbrodt, "Der Wohnraum Adolf Meyers in Weimar," 214.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 218–19.

Closest to the light, the ceiling appears matte, and beyond, framing the room, a shinier paint appears darker in the photograph. Because of the scant photographic and physical evidence it is impossible to make out the exact colors, but they were probably as Schlemmer listed: red, blue, purple, and crimson. The shiny paint bordering the space would have created an interesting spatial play, perhaps a push-pull effect, causing the eye to perceive a change in surface depth. The paint here could be creating architectural features where there were none, on the flat ceiling surface. If this is correct these would be similar to the effects in other wall painting projects from the exhibition, including the Haus am Horn discussed below, or the Haus Auerbach from 1924, considered in the following chapter. The use of different painting techniques, surface textures, and relief elements was a very important part of the experiments of the student work for the exhibition, and these are probably the lessons the wall painting students would have drawn from this project.

Kandinsky's Wall Painting Workshop

While Schlemmer's role in planning and executing works for the 1923 exhibition was extensive, as has been emphasized, he was no longer directly involved in the wall painting workshop's activities. The responsibility for planning the workshop's specific contributions for the exhibition was Kandinsky's. He outlined the four different types of projects that the workshop would execute in a hand-written note from June 1923.⁹⁶ For the first type of "painting," Kandinsky seemed to mean the painting of wall color schemes and he used the German word *Anstrich*, which could also translate as "coating" or "coat of paint or color." He

⁹⁶ These were listed as "I. Anstrich," "II. Wandmalereien," "III. Systematisch Muster," and "IV. Theoretische Tabellen aus dem Farbkurs." (painting, wall painting, systematic patterns, and theoretical tables of color course). Kandinsky, "Wandmalerei: Bauhaus Ausstellung Zweiseitiges Handschriftliches," June 1923, inv. 1020, Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin.

further described in the note what areas were to be painted in this manner: “Bauhaus-(main building) vestibule, hallways, skylight hall, large and small staircase, foyer. In the front building: foyer of the workshop, staircase.”⁹⁷ Kandinsky did not explain how these would be painted. Some of the locations listed were ultimately painted with pictorial works like Schlemmer’s figurative paintings in the foyer of the workshop building or Bayer’s geometric paintings in the back staircase in the main building. Despite these examples, I believe that Kandinsky was describing painting the walls with solid color, in other words coating the architecture, and not pictorial works. The hallways and main public spaces needed a fresh coat of paint. “Painting” is probably the category Kandinsky would have used to group the painting of the Haus am Horn and Gropius’s office discussed below, and therefore forecast the future direction of the workshop.

The second type is “wall paintings,” and Kandinsky used the German term *Wandmalereien*, distinguishing it from *Anstrich*. He described a whole range of different types of wall paintings to be executed in the workshop space, demonstrating the vast possibilities of effects and techniques and the students’ proficiency in their craft.

In the workshop: colored and sculptural treatment of the wall. 1) in existing techniques—distemper, casein paint, oil tempera, oil painting, lime washes, sgraffito, fresco, wax color. 2) colored materials applied to the wall painting – wood, glass, metal. 3) colored wall sculptures in different technical treatments.⁹⁸

These vastly different techniques and experimental works were painted all over the walls of the workshop’s studio; many of them were documented in photographs, some of which were

⁹⁷ “I. Anstrich: Bauhaus-(Hauptgebäude) Vestibül, Gänge, Oberlichtsaal, großes und kleines Treppenhaus, Vorraum. Im Vorbau: Vorraum der Werkstatt, Treppenhaus.” Ibid.

⁹⁸ “II. Wandmalereien: In der Werkstatt: farbige und plastische Behandlung der Wände. 1) in vorhandenen Techniken—Leimfarbe, Kaseinfarbe, Öltempera, Ölmalerei, Kalkfarben, Sgraffito, Fresko, Wachsfarbe. 2) Anwendung in der Wandmalerei farbiger Materialien—Holz, Glas, Metall. 3) Farbige Wandplastik in verschiedenerer technischer Behandlung.” Ibid.

published in the exhibition catalogue. Decades later, Bayer described this category of wall painting instruction in a short essay about the workshop. He wrote they were “experimenting in many techniques on the walls of the workshop under the guidance of the master of technique (werkmeister), experimental designs for painting houses and walls, supergraphics, outdoor advertising, etc., some of them executed on the walls of the workshop.”⁹⁹

The other types of wall painting works that Kandinsky listed—*Systematische Muster*, *farbige Holzbehandlung* (systematic patterns, colored wood treatments), and *Theoretische Tabellen* (theoretical tables)—were either not executed or not documented during the exhibition. While it is unclear what Kandinsky meant by systematic patterns, and colored wood treatments (perhaps wood staining), his vision for theoretical tables is easier to visualize. His note described this type of work: “Theoretical tables from the color course, assortment of colored surfaces among one another and with regards to drawn form. Theoretical explanations for the tables.”¹⁰⁰ The theoretical tables recall Gropius’s proposal for the main building’s vestibule with color wheels and diagrams of the basic shapes and figural forms, discussed in chapter one. Whether these types of charts were originally conceived by Gropius, Schlemmer, or Kandinsky is unclear. Whoever first had this idea—perhaps even Itten, who painted color wheels in the skylight hall of the main building in 1920–1921—tables or charts like this are exactly the types of reference works or dictionary of art, a kind of scientific art directory, that Kandinsky suggested in his 1920 program for INKhUK and in his 1926 Bauhaus book *Point and Line to Plan*.

Beginning in the years before World War I, Kandinsky had searched for a grammar of painting, and this pseudo-scientific interest continued and became more systematic in the

⁹⁹ Bayer, “murals at the bauhaus building in weimar (1923),” 341.

¹⁰⁰ “IV. Theoretische Tabellen aus dem Farbkurs, Zusammenstellung der farbigen Flächen untereinander und mit Bezug auf zeichnerische Form. Theoretische Erklärungen zu den Tabellen.” Kandinsky, “Wandmalerei: Bauhaus Ausstellung zweiseitiges Handschriftliches.”

postwar years.¹⁰¹ His approach is laid out in his articles in the 1923 catalogue “The Basic Elements of Form” and “Color Course and Seminar.” In his essay on the color seminar he discussed the difference between colors in isolation and colors in juxtaposition, the relationship of color and form, and color in composition. All the workshops at the Bauhaus, as he described, had different color needs and problems, but he felt color should be a major concern for all of them.

The individual applications of color demand a special study of the organic makeup of color, its life-force and expectation of life, the possibility of fixing it with bonding materials—according to the actual instance—the technique naturally associated with it, the way of putting on color – according to the given purpose and material—and the juxtaposition of color pigment with other colored materials, such as stucco, wood, glass, metal, etc. These exercises must be carried out with the precisest [sic] possible means, special calculations.¹⁰²

These lessons would be taught in lectures by the teachers, through the student’s independent projects, and through the cooperation of masters and students in exercises. But at the end Kandinsky added: “Particular emphasis is laid upon architectonic considerations: the interior and exterior of architecture, which must in our terms be understood as providing a synthetic basis.”¹⁰³

While this essay relates to his teaching of color in the foundation course, Kandinsky was also thinking about color in relationship to architecture, i.e. wall painting. The theoretical tables would have been a demonstration of the connection of color theory and the color course with the possibilities of wall painting. Bayer’s work, discussed below, may have fit at least in part in this category of theoretical tables. Bayer also listed this type of instruction in his 1978 statement.

Second to the technical experiments were “theoretical teaching consisting mostly in discussions

¹⁰¹ Short, *The Art Theory of Wassily Kandinsky*.

¹⁰² Wassily Kandinsky, “Color Course and Seminar” (1923), in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth Clement Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 503.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

with the form master on color organizations, color systems, psychology of color as propounded in Kandinsky's book, *concerning the spiritual in art*.”¹⁰⁴

Color was becoming increasingly critical to Kandinsky's iteration of the wall painting workshop. In earlier programs and descriptions of the course of study at the Bauhaus, the workshop was described using a variety of terms that reflected the workshop's role and projects. A student trained in the workshop was first described in 1919 as a *dekorationsmaler* (painter-and-decorator), as discussed in chapter one, and the type of works they were expected to produce were murals, panel pictures, and religious shrines, along with ornament. The language evolved, and by 1921 the workshop was populated by wall painters, *wandmaler*. As the workshop developed, and as ornament and decorative painting were abandoned, the terminology adjusted. This is exactly what happened in the new program published in the 1923 exhibition catalogue. Wall painting is no longer identified specifically as such, or as mural painting but, like the other workshop, it is classified by its material—color. Similarly, the metal workshop was labeled metal and the pottery workshop, as clay. Color was the medium and the material of the wall painting workshop, as wood, stone, glass, and metal were the materials for the wood sculpture, stone sculpture, glass-painting, and metal workshops.

In a memo to the Masters Council on April 4, 1924, Kandinsky produced an official definition of what the wall painting workshop was to do and what kind of wall paintings it could execute. Although this document is the first known written description of the curriculum of the wall painting workshop, these ideas were not new; they were the same theories and approaches that Kandinsky began to implement in the previous year and half since his joining the Bauhaus faculty. His students in the wall painting workshop, in addition to investigating color in his

¹⁰⁴ Bayer, “murals at the bauhaus building in weimar (1923),” 341.

preliminary color, form, and drawing courses, were experimenting with color and paint right on the walls of the school. The statement was, on the one hand, a defense and justification of its continued existence as a craft workshop, and, on the other hand, a plan of study for the workshop and an explanation of its goals and potential. Because the wall painting workshop, like the stone sculpture, wood sculpture, and theater workshops, did not design mass-producible industrial products with the potential for profit, a problem for the financially strapped Bauhaus following the 1923 exhibition, the workshop was in danger of shutting down or demotion to experimental workshop.¹⁰⁵ Kandinsky's memo made a plea for the wall painting workshop's relevance and continued importance to the whole Bauhaus project; in addition, it provides insight into his theoretical and practical instruction in the workshop since his arrival.

As clarified first in the revised 1923 curriculum and subsequently discussed in Kandinsky's memo, the material or subject of the wall painting workshop was color. After four years of uncertainty and inconsistent management, the workshop was finally being defined. For Kandinsky, color set the wall painting workshop apart. Unlike the other workshops whose materials were, for example, wood or metal, he described, "One cannot produce any objects with color alone."¹⁰⁶ Color and its ability to change a given form and thus produce a new colored form was, according to Kandinsky, a primary concern of all the work of the Bauhaus and the major focus of this critical workshop. He identified two different possibilities of how colors could act on forms. He described "*das Entstehen*," the emergence or genesis "of color with the given form," as the first possibility, whereby color and form develop together, and "the effects of

¹⁰⁵ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 19.

¹⁰⁶ Kandinsky, "The Work of the Wall-Painting Workshop of the Staatliche Bauhaus (April 1924)." This dissertation uses a revised version of Wingler's translation, which I modified based on the original German published in Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 335.

the form are increased and a new form is created.”¹⁰⁷ Gropius, however, edited Kandinsky’s original document and changed *Entstehen* to *Mitgehen*, which translates to “going along with,” and thus “color goes along with form,” slightly shifting the sense of Kandinsky’s original phrase.¹⁰⁸

The second possibility of the interaction of color and form would be the opposite, in that color would change the form.¹⁰⁹ Color’s capacity, or even power, to transform two- or three-dimensional form could invest it with foremost importance. Kandinsky was clear that whenever color would be added to forms, one of these two outcomes would result in something new, color either enhancing or increasing the effects of the form or altering and transforming the form. Kandinsky further explained that the ability of color to change form should be a primary concern for other workshops and in other media as well, thus emphasizing the centrality of the wall painting workshop investigation of color.¹¹⁰ Kandinsky never explicitly named architecture in his memo, but he did mention the possibilities of using color in space and in spatial design, linking this general color-form theory to question of color and architecture.

Kandinsky went on to explain how the wall painting workshop should approach this topic. For him, the issue of color and form could only be resolved or understood by introducing a systematic program of study into the wall painting workshop involving two separate investigations into the nature of color, before further practical outside commissions could be undertaken.¹¹¹ The first an investigation would look into the chemical-physical characteristics of

¹⁰⁷ Kandinsky, “The Work of the Wall-Painting Workshop of the Staatliche Bauhaus (April 1924).”

¹⁰⁸ Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 335.

¹⁰⁹ Kandinsky, “The Work of the Wall-Painting Workshop of the Staatliche Bauhaus (April 1924).”

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

color, and second would focus on the psychological characteristics of color, or as Kandinsky described, “its material substance” and “its creative force.”¹¹² Along with these two concerns, Kandinsky explained that there were two different ways of working with color. “Technical work,” the use of different materials, techniques, pigments and binders, and “speculative experiments,” which included explorations with compositions, designs, decorations of surfaces, and different treatments of space.¹¹³ For Kandinsky, the possibilities offered by color in the treatment and creation, or design of space, were numerous, and a student in the wall painting workshop must be more familiar and gain experience with surfaces and with the simple properties of color before accepting practical, financially viable commissions.

In his view, the attempt thus far to give equal treatment in the wall painting workshop to both outside production and technical instruction in the fundamentals of colored surfaces had failed. At this point Kandinsky was surely reacting against some of the practical wall painting projects, perhaps the painting of the Jena Municipal Theater, discussed in the previous chapter, or Haus Otte, discussed above, both of which caused some controversy. He was also against the current suggestion, proposed by Bebernis, to open a wall painting workshop outpost for practical work in Berlin.¹¹⁴ Projects for the 1923 exhibition, like the Haus am Horn and Gropius’s office, had provided students with some exposure to the possibilities of commissions. Practical production in this workshop, as in the sculpture, printing, and theater workshops, should be, in his view, secondary to the idea of the synthesis of the arts and the instruction and development of this concept.

¹¹² “ihre materielle Substanz,” “ihre schöpferischen Kräfte”. Ibid.; Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 335.

¹¹³ “Technische Arbeiten,” “Spekulative Versuchsarbeiten”. Kandinsky, “The Work of the Wall-Painting Workshop of the Staatliche Bauhaus (April 1924)”; Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 335.

¹¹⁴ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 19.

The works completed for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition are early indicators of Kandinsky's 1924 statement. Some of the projects were experiments with techniques and binders, like fresco and distemper; others were speculative experiments with compositions, decorative illusions, surface textures, and spatial effects, just as Kandinsky had described in his memo. Some of the paintings enhanced the forms of the walls and spaces painted, others transformed them, like wall painting student Peter Keler and architectural student Farkas Molnár's collaboration for the design of colorful and dynamic passageway into the school. While Kandinsky could have advocated for pictorial wall paintings such as his own *Jury Free* works, by the summer of 1923 he was advocating the study of color and use of color in architecture. The wall painting workshop under Kandinsky no longer focused on enlarging pictorial compositions or easel painting designs onto the wall as former master Schlemmer had done. Wall painting now was concerned with investigations of the pure properties of color and applying them to architectonic spaces in order to create a synthetic work.

Bayer later described Kandinsky's teaching in Nina Kandinsky's *Kandinsky und Ich*:

The instruction was based on exercises for wall paintings for interior and exterior spaces. They were intended to develop a feeling for color integrated with architecture. The practical work was supplemented by discussions about the nature of color and its relationship to form. Each flowed into the other: theory and practice. Theoretical experiences were tested in wall paintings with the most varied materials and techniques. Kandinsky's ideas about the psychology of color and their relationship to space provoked especially animated discussions.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ "Der Unterricht beruhte auf Übungen zu Wandmalereien für Innen- und Außenräume. Damit sollte ein Gefühl für die in die Architektur integrierte Farbe entwickelt werden. Die praktische Arbeit wurde ergänzt durch Diskussionen über die Natur der Farbe und ihrer Beziehung zur Form. Beides ging ineinander über: Theorie und Praxis. Die theoretischen Erfahrungen wurden erprobt in Wandgemälden mit den unterschiedlichsten Materialien und Techniken. Besonders heiße Diskussionen lösten Kandinskys Ideen über die Psychologie der Farben und deren Verhältnis zum Raum aus." Herbert Bayer, quoted in Nina Kandinsky, *Kandinsky und Ich* (Bergisch Gladbach: Bastei-Lübbe, 1978), 111.

The last part of Bayer's statement may be the most telling: "As far as I can remember, Kandinsky's own paintings played no role in the classroom and in the discussions, although they also did not remain entirely excluded."¹¹⁶ The students were testing and searching for the right balance, and an appropriate interaction of color with architecture, but they were not learning to replicate Kandinsky's pictorial compositions. In existing architectural spaces, like those of the van de Velde buildings, this resulted in experiments with techniques and forms, in new construction, like the Haus am Horn, and in more integrated and nuanced approaches, all of which hoped to bring color and architecture into a synthesis.

Blue Circle, Red Square and Yellow Triangle: Herbert Bayer's Wall Paintings in the Back Staircase

Initially it seems that Bayer's wall paintings on the back staircase of the main Bauhaus building were illustrative of Kandinsky's approach and instruction in wall painting (figure 2.16). Located on three different landings, Bayer's paintings depict the correspondence of primary shapes with primary colors that Kandinsky taught and wrote about—a red square, yellow triangle, and blue circle. Certainly these ideas were central to much of Kandinsky's lessons, and Bayer described as much in his 1978 statement. "wassily kandinsky was the form master of this workshop. his theories of the primary forms, circle, square, triangle and their relationship to the primary colors, blue, red, and yellow, were predominant in discussions and influenced the students."¹¹⁷ Bayer's paintings, however, are both iconic and tangential to the overall development of the wall painting workshop. They evoke the Bauhaus's new geometric Constructivist and de Stijl-oriented style and some aspects of Kandinsky's teaching, but they are

¹¹⁶ "Soweit ich mich erinnern kann, spielte Kandinskys eigene Malerei im Unterricht und in den Diskussionen keine Rolle, wenngleich sie auch nicht ganz ausgeklammert blieb." Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Bayer, "murals at the bauhaus building in weimar (1923)," 341.

also different from the other student wall paintings, and, most significant, they were not illustrated in the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition catalogue.

The fame of Bayer's work is due in part to the existence of three types of visual evidence. The paintings are documented in a colored gouache preparatory drawing, in contemporary photographs such as the one by Lucia Moholy (figure 2.17), and in a 1976 reconstruction by Werner Claus (figures 2.18–2.19).¹¹⁸ They are also well known because of Bayer's celebrated Bauhaus and post-Bauhaus American career. Bayer's color gouache is often published in the most important Bauhaus texts, such as Droste's narrative.¹¹⁹ This drawing provides rich visual evidence, as it includes all three paintings at once. In this work, three bright, primary-colored abstract geometric compositions are set within a simplified pencil-drawn architecture, in which floors and staircases are reduced and transparent. The wall paintings in this gouache look like contemporary easel paintings, with geometric allegiance to Kandinsky's theories about the relationship between colors and forms. The colors and shapes—blue circle, red rectangle and yellow triangle—correspond to the ideal results of Kandinsky's student questionnaire from earlier that year, in which he asked all the Bauhaus students to match up each primary color with a primary shape. The survey has remained one of the best known demonstrations of Kandinsky's views on color.¹²⁰ Many versions of the original questionnaire have survived including one by

¹¹⁸ Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, "Rekonstruierte Wandbilder Und Reliefs Des Bauhauses in Weimar," *Bildende Kunst* 27 (1979): 536–39.

¹¹⁹ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 90.

¹²⁰ Droste and other Bauhaus scholars argued that these color relations would still stand today, but a 2002 empirical study by Thomas Jacobsen restaged Kandinsky's survey and found that Kandinsky's results were the least preferred combination of colors and shapes. Thomas Jacobsen, "Kandinsky's Questionnaire Revisited: Fundamental Correspondence of Basic Colors and Forms?," *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 95, no. 3 (December 2002): 903–13; Thomas Jacobsen, "Kandinsky's Color-Form Correspondence and the Bauhaus Colors: An Empirical View," *Leonardo* 37, no. 2 (January 1, 2004): 135–36.

wall painting student Alfred Arndt (figure 2.20).¹²¹ The correspondence of the Bayer paintings to Kandinsky's theoretical work and their demonstration of these principles of design place them into Kandinsky's last category of wall painting projects for the exhibition, theoretical tables from the color course. Bayer's paintings, however, are more than this: they also demonstrate the integration of colors and forms into architectural space as well as movement through the space.

The arrangement and design of the wall paintings complement and reflect their location. Bayer wrote in 1978 that "I dedicated each floor to one of the colors, rising from the deeper blue color on the first floor through the powerful, aggressive red to the light and floating yellow composition with triangles on the third floor."¹²² For Bayer, the blue is a grounded and heavy color on the lower level, while red is vibrant and exciting on the second level, and yellow is the lightest and brightest at the top of the building. The relationships of color to the level and location of the wall painting are even more noticeable in the reconstructed work. In 1976, Bayer's paintings were restored, and they remain today in the back staircase of the Bauhaus University in Weimar. The restoration was completed by Werner Claus, who discovered remains of the original works in 1975.¹²³

Seeing these in situ allows one to move through the space and climbs the stairs, and one sees the paintings emerge and transform, guiding the viewer higher and higher in the building as the colors become brighter and brighter. The paintings are never experienced as they are in the gouache, all at once, but are seen one at a time, or from the midlevel landing, when one can see the top of the last and the bottom of the next at the same time (figure 2.19). Another critical

¹²¹ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 86–88.

¹²² Bayer, "murals at the bauhaus building in weimar (1923)," 341.

¹²³ Winkler, "Rekonstruierte Wandbilder Und Reliefs Des Bauhauses in Weimar." The reconstructed works were produced using the related gouache, the extant fragments and photographs.

advantage of seeing the works in person is the possibility to situate and thus understand them exactly in their architectural framework. I noticed for example that the red landing is directly in front of Walter Gropius's office. Indeed, Lucia Moholy's photograph illustrates this important placement (figure 2.17). The light streams in from an unseen window, highlighting the word *Sekretariat*, indicating the location of Gropius's office, in front of which Moholy took the photograph. The archway of the van de Velde designed Art Nouveau building frames the wall painting, and the arch contrasts with the geometry and straight lines of the wall painting, providing one more example of how Gropius's new art school left its mark on van de Velde's. These paintings are more than theoretical tables—their location in particular reinforces color's correspondence and potential in architecture

By the time he completed these paintings, Bayer had been at the Bauhaus since fall 1921 and in the wall painting workshop since spring 1922. He participated in Kandinsky's Jury-Free wall paintings project, discussed above, and by the time of the 1923 exhibition he was a rising star of the school. Because of their location in a central artery of the main building, Bayer's wall paintings were highly visible. Not only did Bayer paint the three staircase wall paintings, but he also painted a wall in the workshop studio room as well as designing a number of posters and signs for the exhibition.

The publication of the preparatory gouache and a period photograph in the later 1938 catalogue for the Museum of Modern Art's Bauhaus exhibition made Bayer's wall paintings famous. In addition, the gouache supports many common narratives about the Bauhaus, including the use of basic colors and geometric shapes in abstract compositions and Kandinsky's influence on the aesthetic direction of the school. Bayer's wall paintings, however, were in large part three separate pictorial and easel-painting-like compositions, derivative of Kandinsky's

ideas, which were then placed on the wall surface. They do not demonstrate the full extent of the experimentation of the workshop and should not be considered the best singular example of Bauhaus wall painting in 1923. After the summer of 1923, Bayer did not remain in the wall painting workshop and his later career and fame came primarily in the fields of advertising, text design, and photography. While Bayer's wall paintings are indicative of some of Kandinsky's lessons, many of the students in the wall painting workshop were developing new ways to paint on the wall surface. These wall paintings were not based on pictorial compositions applied to the walls, but were paintings designed for specific spaces, fully integrated with and oriented to the architecture, like those for the Haus am Horn, and were often experiments with techniques, materials, and spatial dynamics.

**Workshop Paintings in the 1923 Exhibition Catalogue:
Experiments in Medium, Demonstrations of Technical Fluency, and Intergrations with
Three-Dimensional Space**

Most of the wall paintings executed by the students for the exhibition are little documented. The catalogue published in conjunction with the exhibition offers the best insight into the many wall painting workshop projects, although paradoxically Oskar Schlemmer and Herbert Bayer's wall paintings, the best known today, were not included in it. The catalogue included essays by Gropius, Kandinsky, and others, along with sections devoted to each of the workshops: furniture, wood sculpture, stone sculpture, wall painting, glass painting, metal, pottery, weaving, printing, book binding and theater. A large section titled *Der Raum* (space) included architecture projects and plans, for example the recently completed Jena Theater. The final section of the catalogue is focused on free or independent art of the students and masters.

The wall painting workshop's section included a photograph of the workshop's storeroom (figure 2.21), an original color lithograph of a wall painting design, and five photographs of the workshop's paintings.¹²⁴ Weimar photographer Hermann Eckner may have taken these photographs, although there is little documentation about the publication of the book.¹²⁵ The photograph of the storeroom documents the space and tools of the workshop. The organized, yet cluttered, space is full of barrels and cans of paints, all labeled and stacked on the floor and simple wooden shelves. Next to the window at the end of the space are two blank white canvases, left behind and forgotten, in favor of the wall as a support. Larger barrels of paint, or perhaps binder, which could cover large expanses of wall, fill the left side of the room. It is clear from this image that the workshop's materials are paint, and in large quantities, but it is unclear how exactly these will be used. There are no masters or students; the storeroom is left empty, a moment of calm in the midst of a busy day. It is like a Eugene Atget photograph of the deserted city of Paris: we see the scene of the crime and the workshop's existence is confirmed.¹²⁶ The images following this title page illustrate selected examples of student wall paintings in the workshop's studio. The wall paintings show evidence of the students' engagement with the architectural spaces and locations of their works and exploring the ability of color and paint to change or enhance the features of the space, for example making the space seem larger or highlighting specific elements. Guided by their masters, Kandinsky and Bebernis, the students with these works demonstrated technical accomplishments and skills in a variety of mediums and techniques.

¹²⁴ Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*, 96.

¹²⁵ Andreas Haus, "Photography at the Bauhaus: Discovery of a Medium," in *Photography at the Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 141.

¹²⁶ This idea was discussed in more depth in my talk at the Weimar Colloquium. Morgan Ridler, "The Bauhaus Wall-Painting Workshop through Images," paper presented at the 12th International Bauhaus Colloquium, Bauhaus University Weimar, April, 6, 2013).

Quite purposely the next image in the catalogue is Peter Keler and Farkas Molnár's bright and dynamically colored lithograph, a design for the narrow hallway entrance into the main Bauhaus buildings (figure 2.22). It is the only colored image in the wall painting section of the catalogue and is the most visually exciting. The page is titled "Space Creation of a Passageway, scale 1:66."¹²⁷ Beneath this title, the words—*seite, decke, seite* (side, ceiling, side)—appear, indicating that the left portion of the image would be on the side wall of the passage, the central black and blue section would be on the ceiling, and the right would be on the opposite side wall. Arrows indicate the potential movement through the passageway and the overlapping words—*immer* and *durch*, (keep going)—incorporated into the abstract design, reinforce this movement. Although this image is a plan for an in-situ wall painting it is difficult to read it as three-dimensional, which may account for scholars like Wick, who have dismissed it as decorative.¹²⁸ The areas of color—yellow, blue, and black—join together to create the visual effect of a flat plane, like a canvas or flat wall. The gray strip in the center emphasizes this flatness by straddling the three different sections of the image. The difficulty in expressing a three-dimensional space on a sheet of paper continued to be problem for the workshops in the years to come.

The only known written description of this Keler and Molnár image appeared in a review of the exhibition by O. Stiehl in the magazine *Zentralblatt Der Bauverwaltung*. In the absence of any photographs or drawings of the plan implemented in the location, it is very difficult to understand the scale and relationship to the space. The passageway is described as 3.5 meters

¹²⁷ "Raumgestaltung einer Durchfahrt" in Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*, 97.

¹²⁸ Wick, "Bauhausarchitektur und Farbe," 484.

wide, 10 meters long, and 4.8 meters high.¹²⁹ What one sees in the lithograph is a colorful geometric easel painting type compositions, which have been often likened to a de Stijl painting or Constructivism, perhaps most closely Hungarian Constructivism. Since it is an original lithograph, it is the one of the most visually exciting images in the catalogue, a work of art in itself, not a translation or reproduction.

When the design or “space creation,” (as the German *Raumgestaltung* of the official title should be translated) was installed in the space, it created a dynamic and transformative spatial effect. Color was used to alter the narrow, long, and tall space. Hajo Düchting has described the collaboration between Keler and Molnár as a merging of painting and architecture: “the artificially inflated proportions of the long passage have been improved by the color scheme...the architecture was both organized as well as supported in its function.”¹³⁰ In 1924 Stiehl described the “amazing” project as an example of a “pure craftsmanship exercise.”¹³¹ He went on to explain the arrangement of the strong colors, blue on the ceiling in the back and black in the front, and he emphasized the outlandishness of the color combinations.¹³² The color altered the form, the bright walls lightened and expanded the space, while the darker ceiling visually lowered its height. The color adjusted or corrected the tall narrow passage, and welcomed and shocked the visitor into the Bauhaus.

¹²⁹ O. Stiehl, “Bauhausausstellung,” *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung*, May 28, 1924, quoted in Herzogenrath, “Wandgestaltung,” 172.

¹³⁰ “Die überhöhten Proportionen des langen Durchgangs wurden durch die Farbgebung verbessert,” “Durch rote Pfeile und den Schriftzug ‘Immer durch’ wurde die Architektur sowohl gegliedert wie auch in ihrer Funktion unterstützt.” Hajo Düchting, “Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei: Zum Problem des ‘Farbigen Bauens,’” in *Farbe am Bauhaus: Synthese und Synästhesie* (Berlin: Mann, 1996), 120.

¹³¹ “Von Wandmalerei wird uns neben einigen Proben von rein handwerklicher Übung die erstaunliche ‘Raumgestaltung (sic) einer Durchfahrt’ vorgeführt.” Stiehl, “Bauhausausstellung”; Herzogenrath, “Wandgestaltung,” 172.

¹³² Stiehl, “Bauhausausstellung.” quoted in Scheper, *Colourful!*, 58.

Keler, one of the two designers, was a student in the wall painting workshop. He passed his journeymen's test in the 1923–24 winter semester, but he also worked in other workshops.¹³³ (His cradle design is published in the furniture workshop's section of the catalogue.) On the other hand, Farkas Molnár was not an official student in the wall painting workshop. The Hungarian was enrolled in the Bauhaus's foundations course in 1921, studied for a time in the wall painting and the wood sculpture workshops, and also worked in Gropius's private architectural office.¹³⁴ Molnár is often recognized for his design for an experimental house, the *Red Cube*, for the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition, a statement of simplified geometric and elemental architecture: building reduced to its most elemental shape—the cube.¹³⁵ He was also one of many Hungarians at the Bauhaus and a leader in the KURI group that contributed to the changing ideology and style of the Bauhaus around 1922–1923. His “KURI Manifesto” of 1922 described the process of synthesis and the production of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* as the highest level of human creativity, and specifically described the role of painting and color as a component of the architecture, just as Gropius had in 1919.¹³⁶ For Molnár and the KURI students at the Bauhaus intended that “the decorative and expressive will be replaced by the: Constructive, Utilitarian, Rational, International.”¹³⁷ Keler signed Molnár's manifesto, as did other wall painting students, among

¹³³ Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” 128–129.

¹³⁴ Éva R. Bajkay, ed., *Molnár Farkas (1897–1945): Építész, Festő És Tervezőgrafikus = Architect, Painter and Graphic Designer*, trans. Balázs Sinkovits (Pécs: Pro Pannonia, 2010).

¹³⁵ Molnár also developed drawings for a wall painting for this building called *The Fabricator/The Consumer*. This building, the use of color and pictorial imagery requires a more detailed analysis in the future.

¹³⁶ Farkas Molnár, “KURI Manifesto” (1922), in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930*, ed. Timothy O Benson, trans. John Bátki (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2002), 455–57.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 457.

them, Walter Menzel, Heinrich Koch, and Rudolf Paris.¹³⁸ Keler represented the visual manifestation of the group's ideal in his painting of 1922 (figure 2.23). Red, yellow, blue, and green squares frame the acronym KURI. Similar to the design for the passageway, Keler's painting integrates bright color and text with geometric clarity. The bright primary colors and constructivist aesthetic of the KURI group has yet to be fully explored, but these wall painting designs make clear the connection between the wall painting workshop and the young Hungarians at the Bauhaus. The passageway was in essence a collaborative work between the wall painter Keler and the architect Molnár, a fusion of painting and architecture, color, shapes, and even words, working in synthesis within the architectural space, just as both Molnár and Kandinsky prescribed.¹³⁹

While Keler and Molnár demonstrated the color combinations and “space creation” possible with a fusion of painting and architecture in a public corridor, much of the student work appeared only on the walls of the studio. Josef Maltan and Alfred Arndt's fresco (figure 2.24 and 2.25) was a complex student painting.¹⁴⁰ As illustrated in the catalogue photograph, it reveals some of the workshop's experiments with techniques and the interaction of painting with architectural elements, while also fitting into Kandinsky's second category of wall painting, which included colored and three-dimensional wall treatments using many techniques and materials, from distemper and fresco to wood, glass, and metal.¹⁴¹ Maltan and Arndt's wall

¹³⁸ The Hungarian influence on the Bauhaus is beginning to be more thoroughly discussed in the literature but little link has yet been made between the Hungarians and KURI members and the wall painting workshop, and this should be explored further. See Bajkay ed., *Von Kunst Zu Leben*; and Passuth, “Hungarians at the Bauhaus.”

¹³⁹ Bajkay, “Hungarians at the Bauhaus,” 73.

¹⁴⁰ Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*, 99.

¹⁴¹ “II. Wandmalereien: In der Werkstatt: farbige und plastische Behandlung der Wände. 1) in vorhandenen Techniken—Leimfarbe, Kaseinfarbe, Öltempera, Ölmalerei, Kalkfarben, Sgraffito, Fresko, Wachsfarbe. 2) Anwendung in der Wandmalerei farbiger Materialien—Holz, Glas,

painting was most likely executed in the studio of the wall painting workshop, on the ground floor of the main school building, and was inextricably tied with the location. Today the rooms are radically different, making it difficult to reconstruct this work in its original location.¹⁴²

The wall painting appears in only two photographs. The first and the most well-known image appears in the 1923 exhibition catalogue (figure 2.24). The photograph is shot straight on, so that the painting is largely cut off from the space of the room, a fragmentary document of what the original work would have looked and felt like in the space. Luckily, a second newly discovered photograph captures the painting in progress (figure 2.25).¹⁴³ It is critical to understanding the scale and three-dimensional aspects of the painting. Despite the problems of only having two photographs as evidence, this work cannot be overlooked or ignored.

Although it has been suggested that the wall painting possibly alludes to natural imagery, I believe it is more likely is that an integration with the existing architectural elements of the wall surface became a starting point for a design based in elemental rectangles and circular forms.¹⁴⁴ The abstract wall painting is composed of geometric shapes: squares, circles, and rectangles along with S-curves and semicircles. A central grouping of shapes—two overlapping squares, a circle, and a semi-circle floating across a long horizontal rectangle, extending to left of it—is intersected by two white lines from the right and the left. This central group dominates the center of the wall, but on the left and the right are complex multipart groupings of semicircles, vertical bands, and other rectangular shapes. The painting demonstrates to both the on-site viewer and

Metall. 3) Farbige Wandplastik in verschiedenerer technischer Behandlung.” Kandinsky, “Wandmalerei: Bauhaus Ausstellung Zweiseitiges Handschriftliches.”

¹⁴² Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” 130.

¹⁴³ See *Bauhaus Alben 3* in 2008: Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” 145.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* Winkler describes natural elements, for example a horizon line and wave like motifs; however I do not agree with this assessment.

the reader of catalogue the potential of the medium of fresco for creating various illusionistic effects. The vertical bands seem to be modeled using chiaroscuro, from light to dark, creating the illusion of round columns, which gives the effect of projecting beyond the flat plane of the wall.

Klaus-Jürgen Winkler has described this work as expressing and exploring different elements of the cosmos: air, water, and the built environment.¹⁴⁵ In this reading, the wavy lines, which transverse the painting from left to right, indicate the surface of the water, and the horizontal lines create an effect of a horizon. The massing of elements on the right suggests a harbor and buildings.¹⁴⁶ While some elements, such as the sequentially smaller line of arched half-moon shapes, may suggest clouds, this naturalization of the geometric shapes into figurative or natural sources is not obvious. Winkler's impulse to see these shapes and forms as landscape related imagery is misguided, and the result perhaps of a desire to relate this work to Schlemmer's or Gilles's pictorial wall paintings. What is more striking, and what is more an indication of the reasons for these various compositional elements, is the radiator projecting from the wall in the lower left. Given its permanence, it looks as if Maltan and Arndt incorporated it into the composition of the painting. The pattern of the radiator's vertical heating elements, rounded corners, and three-dimensional volume are repeated throughout the design. Directly above the radiator, four dark semicircles project upward into four rounded modeled bands, which are exactly the width of the heating element. A wavy line projects from the right edge of the radiator to the top of the painting, sectioning off that which is directly above the radiator from the rest of the painting. On the top right, the radiator shapes are repeated in five more vertical modeled bands that get more narrow, smaller and smaller.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

In addition to compositional elements that seem to be originating from the radiator's form, the fresco incorporates a scale and layout shaped by the heating element. The composition is broken down into four sections loosely based on the radiator's width. This is most easily seen in the in-progress photograph, which shows the layout and planning lines for the fresco. The vertical bands in the upper right are exactly the same width as the radiator itself, as are the bands on the left, which bookend and frame the central section of the painting. In the photograph of the finished painting, the radiator has been painted a uniform color that harmonizes with the overall composition. It is inescapable that the source or reference for these vertical bands and the forms that expand from them are rooted in the radiator's presence.

Further evidence of the composition's interaction and interest in the three-dimensional elements are the raised panels, or elevated plaster reliefs, adhered to the wall and incorporated into the abstract design. These are the type of elements that Kandinsky described in his note as colored wall sculpture or sculptural treatments of the wall, and they are confirmed by the in-progress photo, which shows clearly that the panels were added to the wall before color was applied. In the final work, the semicircular S-curve shape in the center group is completed on the bottom by a raised white curved panel. Adhered to the wall on the right, semicircular and rectangular panels push into the space of the room. The designers have used the existing architectural features and constructed and added other three-dimensional elements to the composition, bringing the painting into real space of the room.

The photograph of this playful and visually surprising work flattens it from three dimensions into two, and the actual three-dimensional elements—the radiator and panels—are hard to distinguish from the trompe l'oeil painting effects of the fresco. Because of the straight-on framing of the image, the photograph makes the painting at first look a little like a modernist

easel painting. Most photographs of Bauhaus wall paintings ineffectively or falsely indicate the effects of the actual works. They cannot accurately record the spatial effects, subtleties of texture and surface, or most important the colors of the walls.¹⁴⁷ In this case, the published photograph does not allow the viewer to understand what is real and what is paint, while the personal experience of this work was probably much more self-explanatory. The actual experience would also have brought more attention to the medium of the painting—fresco—as identified in the caption for the photograph in the catalogue. This painting demonstrates the abilities of the students and their proficiency with this classical wall painting process.

Fresco is, as is well known, a difficult and ancient technique that requires the use of wet plaster, short working times, and much practice. In 1926 fresco “was regarded [during the Renaissance] as the supreme text of skill requiring the most perfect craftsmanship, while utilizing the simplest means.”¹⁴⁸ Fresco painting was seen as the preeminent medium for wall painting, a technique that bound the painting with the wall surface.¹⁴⁹ The photograph of the work in-progress helps to create a sense of the materiality, technique, and the process of execution. One can see how Maltan and Arndt broke the composition into smaller sections that could be completed in a day, the length of time before the wet plaster, on which one must paint, would dry. Grid lines marked off sections, and the individual forms, squares, and circles created

¹⁴⁷ I have explored this topic more fully. Ridler, “The Bauhaus Wall-Painting Workshop through Images.”

¹⁴⁸ Arthur Pillians Laurie, *The Painter’s Methods and Materials: The Handling of Pigments in Oil, Tempera, Water-Colour and in Mural Painting, the Preparation of Grounds and Canvas, and the Prevention of Discolouration, Together with the Theories of Light and Colour Applied to the Making of Pictures* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1926), 191.

¹⁴⁹ For a contemporary German descriptions of the technique of fresco painting see: Herman Sachs, *Lehrbuch der Maltechnik: vollständige Anleitung zum werkstattmässigen Herstellen von Fresco-, Fresco-secco-, Stucco-lustro-, Tempera-, Kasein- und Olmalereien, mit Anhang über die Herstellungsmethoden von Stuckmarmor-Intarsia, Sgraffito, Stucco-lustro-Reliefs* (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1927).

their own sections. This large painting would have provided Maltan and Arndt important and useful experience with this medium and would have demonstrated to the viewers of the exhibition that the Bauhaus wall painting students were familiar with this ancient technique.

The two students who created this work were recurring figures, who contributed to many projects in the workshop. Maltan first enrolled at the Bauhaus in spring 1921, and by the winter semester of 1921–1922 he was working as an apprentice in the wall painting workshop. In spring 1923, the timeframe for this fresco, he rose to the rank of journeyman.¹⁵⁰ Maltan appears to have left the Bauhaus after summer 1923 and little is known of the remainder of his career. Arndt, on the other hand, is a well-documented and a longtime member of the Bauhaus community and the wall painting workshop. Arndt enrolled in the Bauhaus in the winter of 1921–1922 and began as an apprentice in the wall painting workshop in spring 1922. He passed the journeyman test in 1924, and remained involved in the workshop for many years.¹⁵¹ Arndt's contribution to the workshop and his important projects, such as Haus Auerbach, will be considered frequently in the subsequent chapters.

The published photograph of the fresco by Maltan and Arndt allows the reader to interpret the painting, albeit with difficulty, as architectural space. On the opposite page in the catalogue, however, a photograph of a fresco designed by Walter Menzel, an apprentice in the workshop, is so completely cropped, removed from its surroundings and from any reference to the architecture, that it is difficult to read it as wall painting (figure 2.26).¹⁵² Because of this cropping, the painting seems flattened, and in the catalogue it is presented to reader as an easel painting. The major focus of the composition is a circle at left-center. It cannot contain the

¹⁵⁰ Winkler, "The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar," 128.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*, 100.

rectangular and triangular planes that seem to project out, left and right. These planes overlap and converge, and at times seem to be transparent. The painting creates an illusion of spatial projection and recession and most likely the colors would have aided in this effect.

Little known, Menzel was a student of Gertrud Grunow in 1922, and she wrote that he was “strong and promises to be a really good Bauhäusler.”¹⁵³ He first was a member of the wood sculpture workshop but, by 1923, he had changed to the wall painting workshop, where he remained as an apprentice through spring 1924. Another illustration of his foundation course work was published in the beginning of the catalogue, but no other works by Menzel are known. He seems to have been a friend of Molnár; they are mentioned together a number of times in the Master Council meeting records and they shared a studio space.¹⁵⁴ Where his fresco wall painting was located or really what it looked like in person is unknown. But it was most certainly another example of the wall painting workshop’s experimental work and a new application of fresco painting techniques.

The workshop’s technical proficiencies and use of a multitude of techniques and mediums are exemplified in the last photograph of student wall paintings in the exhibition catalogue. It depicts two paintings, one by Bayer and another by Rudolf Paris, which meet in the corner of a room, presumably still the workshop’s studio in the main building (figure 2.27).¹⁵⁵ In comparison to the cropped photograph of Menzel’s painting, the photograph of this corner composition provides a good sense of the architectural space and the paintings within it. The corner arrangement acknowledges the joining of two wall planes, although, like the other

¹⁵³ Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 167.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 269, 285, 295.

¹⁵⁵ Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*, 101.

photographs in the catalogue, significant visual and spatial ambiguity exists.¹⁵⁶ As in the aforementioned examples, both of these paintings demonstrate the potential of their mediums, sgraffitto and distemper, respectively. Within the compositions, three architectural elements—two radiators and a large window—disrupt the wall surfaces. In Bayer’s painting on the left, the white radiator almost blends into the white background of the geometric painting. The forms of radiator and its tubing are mimicked in the rectangle and circles above, and the parallel lines of the radiator are echoed in horizontal lines to the left and above. The work is further documented by another photograph (figure 2.28), retouched and published for the first time in 2008 in *Bauhaus Alben 3*. The second photograph crops the wall painting and reduces any nuance of color or shade to a harsh black-and-white image. In the exhibition catalogue’s photograph, it is clear that a variety of colors were used, for example, a light tone in the top rectangle. Winkler pointed out the high quality of the sgraffitto technique in the overlapping semicircular forms and fine linear structures of the design.¹⁵⁷ Sgraffitto involves layers of plaster, which are then engraved or scraped off to reveal glazed or tinted plaster underneath.¹⁵⁸ This technique creates a relief effect on the wall and can be enhanced with the addition of fresco sections.¹⁵⁹

On the right wall, in the painting designed and executed by Paris, the radiator is painted black, and above it, straight up the wall, stretches a darker band of colors and shapes, the same width as the radiator, as if the heat is spreading up the wall. A white or light colored circle and

¹⁵⁶ Herbert Bayer’s wall is executed in sgraffitto technique and Rudolf Paris’s wall is glue-bound distemper in several techniques. The 1938 Museum of Modern Art catalogue, which reproduces this image, labels the right wall as “calcimine used in various ways by R. Paris.” Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius and Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919–1928* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938).

¹⁵⁷ Winkler, “The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar,” 132.

¹⁵⁸ Harold Osborne, “Graffito,” *The Oxford Companion to Western Art*, ed. Hugh Brigstocke, accessed March 28, 2014, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t118/e1101>.

¹⁵⁹ Sachs, *Lehrbuch der Maltechnik*, 79–80.

square dominate the center and on the right side a window's rectangular frame and mullions are repeated in the grid-like geometry of the other rectangular shapes scattered throughout the composition. The glass has been photographed in such a way that it is not reflective or transparent, and it reads as simply white rectangles with dark borders. Consequently, the window is at first not visible or recognizable as such, and it, like the radiators, have been disguised and camouflaged by the wall painting composition. The photograph itself appears to increase the camouflaging of the immobile architectural elements. Unlike the photographs of the paintings of Menzel or Maltan and Arndt, where there is little suggestion that the paintings occupy three-dimensional space, in this image there is a sense of depth, though it is still somewhat ambiguous. For example, it is unclear if the floor starts a little under the radiators, or if the black band, represents the floor or the bottom of the walls. Is the gray triangle at the very front of the picture plane a rug, or the floor itself?

This Paris work, along with others first published in the 2008 *Bauhaus Alben*, do just as Kandinsky instructed: they demonstrate the different techniques in which the students had become proficient and the variety of effects they could create. The 1923 catalogue labeled this painting's technique as *Leimfarbe in verschiedenen Techniken* (distemper in various techniques); the 1938 Museum of Modern Art catalogue, *Bauhaus 1919–1928*, labeled it as “Calcimine used in various ways.”¹⁶⁰ Distemper is a traditional water-based technique made up of calcium carbonate with a binding agent, often animal glue. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century it was very popular because it is simple, easy, and quick-drying and creates a flat finish, although the surface of a pure distemper wall painting is water soluble, and therefore not very durable. Often other proteins, waxes, and oils, including casein, were added to the distemper to

¹⁶⁰ Nierendorf, *Staatliches Bauhaus, Weimar*; Bayer, Gropius, and Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919–1928*, 70.

create a more permanent surface.¹⁶¹ For Paris's work, the exact make-up of the binder or the type of technique cannot be identified. The difference between Paris's distemper and Bayer's adjacent sgraffito is highlighted by the combination of these two paintings in one photograph. Unlike Bayer's sgraffito, Paris's composition includes a number of gradations of light to dark and bands of modulated color, using chiaroscuro, which demonstrate the possibilities of the medium and technique. While Bayer's work is extremely linear, with delicate details and sharp lines, Paris's seems to include many different colors as well as shading and blending effects.

A newly published photograph in *Bauhaus Alben 3*, depicting a corner of the workshop from 1922, provides another insight into the practice and working methods of the workshop's students (figure 2.29).¹⁶² The walls of the workshop were used to investigate forms as well as techniques. The photograph shows two walls sectioned off into different working areas, and in each section different types of experiments and technical exercises are being executed. The far left wall has been divided into a grid and painted with different patterns. The three elemental shapes, a circle, square and triangle, overlap in the middle, but at the corner, lines project out in a fan-like manner. The wall paintings completed for the 1923 exhibition are an extension of these exercises.

The Hungarian Lajos Kassak may be another source for the experimental and pictorial student wall paintings (figure 2.30). Kassak was the editor of the influential avant-garde journal *MA* and a close friend of Moholy-Nagy and the other Hungarians at the Bauhaus. He published the *Bildarchitektur* (pictorial architecture) manifesto in the March 1922 edition of *MA*, and as Eva Krörner discussed, his symbolic paintings and works on paper represented the social

¹⁶¹ Harriet A. L. Standeven, *House Paints, 1900–1960: History and Use*, (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2011).

¹⁶² Winkler, *Bauhaus Alben 3*, 140.

revolution in pure colors and pure forms.¹⁶³ The brightly colored geometric shapes overlap and intersect like the planes of the wall. The semicircular plane and rectangular planes are much like those in Bayer's or Maltan and Arndt's designs.¹⁶⁴

Overall, most of the student works in the 1923 exhibition and in the catalogue were experiments with modeling and chiaroscuro effects and other illusionistic techniques. The students were using paint to create their own forms and they would use these techniques to subtly modify and change architectural space with color in other projects. They also used geometric shapes and complex pictorial compositions, creating, as Kandinsky prescribed, a "colored and sculptural treatment of the wall."¹⁶⁵ The photographs often play with these three-dimensional elements so the effects seem flattened and abstracted. In contrast to Wick's assessment of these works as "free, abstract compositions,"¹⁶⁶ I read these wall paintings as incorporating and referring to the architecture and elements of the individual spaces, playing with and repeating the shapes of the immobile elements, interacting and integrating with the space of the room. Permanent features of the walls, such as radiators, interfere with the flat surface, but the workshop students emphasized these elements, and used their painting techniques so these obstacles no longer were a detriment or a problem. The workshop was not interested in just applying an easel painting composition to a wall surface, but they were using all their skills and techniques to demonstrate to the viewer the possibilities of paint and color in space relating to architecture. It might have been Kandinsky who selected the photographs to be published in the catalogue. Even if the student works published were not thoroughly representative of the

¹⁶³ Eva Körner, "Kassak, The Artist," in *Lajos Kassak: Retrospective Exhibition*, ed. Paul K. Kovesdy (New York: Matignon Gallery, 1984), 13-15.

¹⁶⁴ The comparisons with Kassak's works need to be researched further.

¹⁶⁵ Kandinsky, "Wandmalerei: Bauhaus Ausstellung Zweiseitiges Handschriftliches."

¹⁶⁶ Wick, "Wassily Kandinsky," 196.

workshop's projects, they certainly demonstrated the great breadth of approach and techniques with which the wall painting workshop was becoming fluent.

Color in Architecture at the 1923 Exhibition: Haus am Horn and Gropius's Office

Two other wall painting projects, the Haus am Horn and Gropius's office, were in new spaces, not on the walls of existing rooms as in the wall painting studio room, the back staircase, or the entry of the workshop building. These were wall color schemes designed specifically for a new building—the Haus am Horn—and a renovation—Gropius's office. In these two projects, the workshop executed some of the first fully realized cohesive, subtle, and architecturally engaged wall painting schemes of the Weimar Bauhaus. These works are some of the best documented of the wall painting workshop. Although these two projects may be small, they provide the foundation for the more extensive wall painting schemes in future projects, which will be discussed in the next chapter. In these works, the students were more than just painting single colors on the walls of rooms, they were using color and the division of walls into colored blocks or sections to transform, emphasize, and sometimes destabilize the space.

In both projects, the architects, Georg Muche, who was painter with no training as an architect, and Gropius, respectively, were to some degree active in the designs of the wall paintings. There is no documentation of these interactions, however, and therefore no way to tell if the wall painting schemes were an invention of the architects, the wall painting workshop, or collaborative. The credit for the design of the wall paintings in the Haus am Horn is given to two wall painting students. In the case of Gropius's office, the architect is usually given full credit for the entire room, including the wall painting. I believe that both were collaborative projects, demonstrations of the unification of the Bauhaus workshops, and no single authorship can be clearly discerned.

The Haus am Horn was an experimental house designed by Mucbe and furnished and finished by the Bauhaus's workshops (figure 2.31). The project was intended as a coordination of the different Bauhaus workshops and a demonstration of the possibilities of mass-produced affordable housing. In 1925 Adolf Meyer published *Ein Versuchshaus des Bauhauses*, the third book in the Bauhaus book series, about this project, in which he lists the input of the various workshops involved. These included the furniture workshop, weaving and others, and wall painting designs by Alfred Arndt and Josef Maltan. He used the phrase *Ausmalung der Innenräume* (painting of the interior) to describe the wall painting workshop's participation in the building.¹⁶⁷ He used the German word *Ausmalung* to describe what in English usually translates to painting. More specifically, *Ausmalung* refers to the painting of an interior space from the verb *ausmalen* which means to color or paint the surface.

No comprehensive plan, documentation, or record of the interior wall painting for these spaces exists. The restoration of the building completed in 1999 resulted in only partial reconstruction of the original colors.¹⁶⁸ Even from the scant findings of the restorers, it is clear that Maltan and Arndt implemented a complex wall painting scheme for the building.¹⁶⁹ In *Haus am Horn, Rekonstruktion einer Utopie*, Barbara Happe wrote about the coloration of the house arguing that despite the common idea that it was a white cube, significant color was used both inside and out. Happe included an array of contemporary accounts of the Haus am Horn's coloration. For example, one contemporary critic, Erich Lichtenstein, wrote about the "tinted

¹⁶⁷ Adolf Meyer, *Ein Versuchshaus des Bauhauses in Weimar*. (Munich: A. Langen, 1924), 65.

¹⁶⁸ Happe, "Farbigkeit."

¹⁶⁹ Very few spaces were found to not have some original wall colors because of the harsh post-Bauhaus life of the building.

colors” and “fine coordinated colors, which leave a feeling of completely restructured harmony.”¹⁷⁰

Maltan and Arndt used restrained color in mostly pastel colors to form space; the colored surfaces divided and accentuated the architecture and emphasized the usage. The living room, the central space of the uniquely planned home around which the other rooms circulate, provides an informative example of the types of colors and the approach used throughout. The room is tall, at 4.15 meters, much higher than the surrounding spaces. Around the top of these high walls, Muche added clerestory windows. Many different wall color samples were taken from this space during the restoration process, and although no definitive color scheme could be determined, two dominant colors were identified in this room: light green and yellow (figures 2.32–2.33). The northwest and northeast walls were painted a mid-toned ochre green, and the southwest and southeast walls were a sober yellow, as Happe described them.¹⁷¹ These light colors contrasted with the baseboards and other trim elements that were originally made of black opaque glass, a material manufactured by Deutsche Spiegelglas AG in many different colors and patterns.¹⁷² Off the living room is a small office niche, which according to current research, was painted white. The large window of the niche was trimmed in red and, like the black baseboards, this dark color contrasts with the light walls.

The most interesting color element of this living room space, which overall is conservative and subtle, is the extension of the yellow wall color onto the ceiling of the room. In a black-and-white photograph of the living room with office niche (figure 2.34), there appear to

¹⁷⁰ “...zusammen mit den fein abgestimmten Farben, die ein Gefühl vollkommener Harmonie hinterlassen,” “farbig getönt.” Quoted in Happe, “Farbigkeit,” 37.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 5–6.

¹⁷² According to Happe, some of these opaque glass baseboards and trim remain intact in the Haus am Horn, including in the living room. Happe, “Farbigkeit.”

be two distinct colors on the ceiling, a darker color on most of the ceiling and a lighter color in a small band, about the width of the space between the clerestory windows and the wall. This small band is the same color as the adjoining wall, extending that wall color onto the ceiling. Another example of this effect is visible in another photograph of the living room of the opposite corner, in which the color of wall also appears to extend to the ceiling (figure 2.35). This strategy of extending the wall color onto the ceiling was used the following year by Arndt in Haus Auerbach. The appearance of this technique in Haus Auerbach, as well as the contemporary photographs of the Haus am Horn, led the restorers to implement it in the Haus am Horn, despite the lack of clear physical evidence on the walls and ceiling during restoration.¹⁷³

The yellow band, although subtle, changes the architecture's space. It uses color to carve out a shallow alcove in the living room wall and give the illusion of a soffit or change in ceiling height. This shifting and slight shaping of the architecture with the color on the walls, creating the sensation of architectural features with color, is exactly what Kandinsky discussed a few months later in April 1924, that the color would change the given form. Other suggestions of this type of intervention and modification of space with color, the use of color to highlight or even fabricate architecture elements like dropped ceilings and soffits, are implied, although not well documented, in the black and white photographs of the renovation of Adolf Meyer's apartment in 1923 and described in the paintings by Dörte Helm for the Haus Otte. But it is with the Haus am Horn, one of the great achievements of the 1923 exhibition, that the workshop was able to implement a type of wall painting that integrated with the architecture. This was an approach that could and would be used again in other new architecture projects. These subtle

¹⁷³ Ibid.

colorations were designed to suit the architecture, uses of the rooms, and also to transform the space with colored paint.¹⁷⁴

A more documented example of this kind of spatial play with color in the 1923 exhibition is the re-design of Walter Gropius's office (figure 2.36). This project began in the weeks leading up to the exhibition, and was finished, in 1924, after the close of the exhibition. Gropius's office, as discussed above, is often mentioned in conjunction with the Bauhaus's shift toward de Stijl and Constructivism. For example, the lamp hanging in the room in the famous photograph from 1924 is often compared with a de Stijl light fixtures (figure 2.37). Recent texts have discussed this room in part because of its restoration in the main Bauhaus building, which currently houses the Bauhaus University (figure 2.38).¹⁷⁵ One of these texts, Winkler and Oschmann's detailed book *Gropius-Zimmer*, moved beyond a discussion of the de Stijl references and concentrated on actual space. It gave a detailed history of the project; a rich analysis of the room, including all elements—furniture, wall painting, textiles; and a full discussion of the restoration.

Winkler's discussion began with the first idea for the room at the September 15, 1922, Masters Council meeting, and included information on the actual implementation of the project as well as the adjacent vestibule designed by Johannes Itten and Josef Albers.¹⁷⁶ Winkler argued throughout that the office was a demonstration of Gropius's theory of space and had special status as an expression of the whole Bauhaus project at this transitional moment. Gropius is understood as the protagonist of the overall design of the room. In the space, he formed a cube

¹⁷⁴ Another example of a specific room design is the children's room. This space seems to have been at least partially a design by Alma Buscher, who most certainly designed the furniture and toys. See Michael Siebenbrodt, ed., *Eine neue Welt für Kinder: Alma Siedhoff-Buscher* (Weimar: Stiftung Weimarer Klassik und Kunstsammlungen, 2004).

¹⁷⁵ Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*; Peter Müller, "Mental Space in a Material World: Ideal and Reality in the Weimar Director's Office," in *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model* (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 153–156.

¹⁷⁶ Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*, 11.

within a cube using false walls, curtains, light fixtures, and furniture as well as wall and ceiling painting to separate interior and exterior. Winkler also discussed at length Bayer's isometric drawing of the room (figure 2.39). This lithograph, which was exhibited at 1923 exhibition and published in the catalogue, expressed the ideals of the space, which was not yet finished. Delays occurred because the furniture and other critical elements were not finished in time for the exhibition. But the wall painters were punctual. On July 23, Beberniss reported to the Masters Council that the painting of Gropius's office was completed.¹⁷⁷ But Beberniss made no mention whose design was implemented and how the concept originated.¹⁷⁸

Winkler admitted that the "artistic impulse for the color design came from the workshop," but one must also assume authorship by Gropius.¹⁷⁹ While there is no reason to disagree with Winkler's assessment that Gropius was the supervisor of the design, although the architect was not a trained wall painter or particularly well versed in color. These wall paintings are too closely related to the Haus am Horn wall paintings by Arndt and Maltan, as well as Arndt's later work at Gropius's Haus Auerbach, for them not be a result of the experimentations in the workshop using the basic notion that paint and color can have a powerful effect on the space. This was exactly Kandinsky's argument about nine months later in his 1924 memo about the approach of the wall painting workshop. Collaboration would surely have been part of the project, with Gropius approving and commenting on the wall painting concept, but the painting design and execution must have been the result of the wall painting workshop.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 17.

¹⁷⁸ Heinrich Beberniss, "Monatsberichts Der Wandmalereiwerkstatt," July 23, 1923, Nr.177 Bl.10, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar, accessed May 19, 2014, http://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ThHStAW/receive/ThHStAW_file_00000416.

¹⁷⁹ "Es ist möglich, dass auch künstlerische Impulse für die Farbgestaltung aus dieser Werkstatt kamen..." Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*, 17–18.

The restoration of the space in the Bauhaus University main building, completed in 1999, was detailed and comprehensive (figure 2.40). Personal experience and photographs of the reconstructed space, as well the images published in the book *Gropius Zimmer*, which includes period photographs, Bayer's isometric drawing, and photographs of the reconstruction, all provide significant visual material from which to understand the 1923 space. Although there are no extant plans, aside from Bayer's illustration, in my best assessment the wall color schemes were accurately reconstructed. Therefore, the following description and analysis is drawn predominately from the reconstruction.

A five cubic-meter space was created in a rectangular room by the fabrication of a partition wall. Inside of the large cube was an interior small cube, measuring 3.15 meters on each side, defined on the two walls by a framed bast fiber wall covering and a silk curtain, on the floor with a bright geometric carpet by Benita Otte, and on the ceiling with a bright yellow square. The outside edges of the small cube are also articulated by the complex tubular and linear light fixture as well as by the furniture shapes and arrangement, which were meticulously described by Winkler. His description of the wall paintings and the paint color included them as one element in the overall "cosmos" created in the space and the total work of art of the space design. According to Winkler everything works together.¹⁸⁰ The wall and ceiling paintings were critical to the overall concept of the space; however, some texts, for example, Peter Müller's essay in the *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model* catalogue, barely mentioned the wall colors.¹⁸¹ Most commonly emphasis has been given, even in Winkler's description, to the furniture and light fixture. But the walls provide the backdrop for all these elements. Each wall or ceiling surface of the room was divided into sections, or color blocks, that defined the different spaces and created forceful

¹⁸⁰ Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*.

¹⁸¹ Müller, "Mental Space in a Material World."

spatial effects. Much of the room was painted a pale beige or off-white color. On the west and partition walls, a similar beige fabric wall covering and a curtain were set off from this wall with dark wood frames, much like the dark trim in the Haus am Horn. These fabrics defined the wall of the interior cube of the room, along with the soft fabrics of the upholstered furniture and carpet.

A photograph of the reconstructed space facing the north wall window best illustrates the arrangement of wall and ceiling colors (figure 2.41). The photograph shows how the small interior cube on the ceiling is delineated with a bright, light yellow square with the same dimensions of the small cube. This is not quite the primary hue of the upholstered fabric of the chair and sofa, but is still much more saturated than the beige on most of the walls. To the right of the yellow square, the ceiling is the same beige as a majority of the walls. But a third color is introduced on the ceiling—gray—and it extends from the edge of the yellow square to the window wall, and down onto large areas of the adjacent window walls. To summarize, the ceiling has been painted three distinct colors in relationship to the organization of the space: seating area, entry, and workspace. The ceiling effects also extend onto the walls, as in the Haus am Horn. The gray color of the area near the window activates that space; it seems to pull out or extend that area of the room from the interior cube toward the outside space seen through the window. The beige area, on the other hand, is grounded in the interior of the room, anchored by the similar color of the bast fabric and silk curtain.

The last and boldest element in the color scheme is the repetition of bright yellow in the far corner. Along the top of the walls, a bright yellow band runs from the edge of the window to the doorway, which is hidden by a Bauhaus wall hanging. The band is dropped down from the ceiling the same distance as the window next to it, leaving a small strip of gray. This accent

colored element was conceived, in part, by the immobile architectural element, the window. It also relates to the synthetic interior cube, and expands the same yellow as the square on the ceiling into the larger cubic space. The yellow square pushes the top of the imaginary interior cube up to the ceiling, while the yellow band pushes the corner of the interior cube out to the edges of the room. The band also adds a punch of color to the gray north wall, repeating the yellow tones of the furniture, rug, and wall hangings in the interior cube.

Overall, the colors on the walls are not the bright vibrant primaries of a de Stijl-designed space like the Schröder House (figure 3.16). They are muted gray and beige with a pop of yellow. Winkler's described them as a harmonious but restrained and neutral.¹⁸² The wall colors are subtle yet critical; they direct the eye toward the corners, they make one aware of the other color relationships, and they help to structure the complex cubic composition underlying the design. The color design worked within Gropius's overall concept for the room and it was also related to the overall development in the wall painting workshop. The approach fit directly into Kandinsky's theories about the synthesis of the arts: the architect, painter, and other designers coming together to create the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. This is one type of color/form relationship that Kandinsky described in his memo; color and form develop together as color is able to enhance and increase the effects of the space. Gropius's office has become a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The wall color schemes of Gropius's office and the Haus am Horn herald the mature projects of the workshop. While it was educational and useful for the students to paint exercises and experiments and to demonstrate to the visitor of the exhibition the talents of the students and their skills of working with different painting techniques like fresco and distemper, the use of color and paint in new architectural spaces signaled the future of Bauhaus wall painting. Similar

¹⁸² Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer*, 66–67.

wall painting strategies were used again in workshop projects in Haus Auerbach and the new Bauhaus buildings in Dessau, discussed in the next chapter. The many types of 1923 wall paintings examined in this chapter might seem utterly unlike, from the figurative paintings of Schlemmer and the pictorial and geometric works by wall painting students to the subtle wall color schemes, but overall there are a number of similarities. One is color's power to push or pull walls and ceilings, to shift the sense of space; whether in the passageway of the Bauhaus building Weimar, in which the movement through the small hallway was emphasized and the space made to feel larger, or in Meyer's apartment, in which painting on the ceiling emphasized the light fixture and the total color composition of the room. Another commonality is that the wall painting students and masters were always working in actual spaces and the immovable elements, doors, window, and radiators were essential, from Kandinsky's *Jury Free* paintings to the experimental student works in the studio. For example, Kandinsky's paintings were not subordinate to the architectural form of the space, but they also did not ignore the architecture. Lastly, materials mattered. From fresco to distemper, wall painting students were experimenting with techniques and mediums, and this emphasis, which Kandinsky discussed, would become more important in the following years.

The easel painting type of compositions that Schlemmer and Bayer were applying to the wall, even if they were related to architectural spaces, were a dead end for the wall painting workshop. While connection with the Hungarian Constructivists, such as Kassak, may have inspired some of the pictorial elements, the experiments with architectural features—like radiators—acknowledged a relationship to the space that would be fundamental to the evolving Bauhaus wall painting approach. These experiments led to the manipulation and accentuation of architecture through color, without figures or geometric forms.

It is unclear exactly how Kandinsky or Bebernis were instructing and guiding the students in the months leading up to the 1923 exhibition, but we may infer lessons from the few documented paintings. One must assume that the works that were published in the catalogue and incorporated in the important Haus am Horn and Gropius's office would have corresponded with the masters' teachings. Despite the assumption that Kandinsky's students would make wall paintings like his own *Jury Free* works or like Bayer's staircase wall paintings, Kandinsky was concentrating on and instructing his students in the lessons of color. Color, not just in pictorial compositions applied to wall but fully integrated into the architectural space, creating what Kandinsky described as a synthesis of the arts. Students were developing their own approaches to wall painting with the temporary experimental works of the studio or in the more permanent and architectural originated projects of Haus am Horn and Gropius's office.

With hindsight, the future direction of the wall painting workshop, post-1923, seems obvious; however, because of the great diversity of projects at the time, wall painting still appeared undefined. The questions of what and how the workshop would paint and color architecture were unanswered and ambiguous. How could wall painting fit into the new direction of the school? Could the workshop make a profit? This is where Kandinsky found himself in spring 1924 when he wrote his memo. The exhibition was not as financially successful as had been hoped and the wall painting workshop was on the chopping block. Kandinsky had to defend the existence of the workshop within the whole concept of the school. The memo was about big ideas, the possibilities of wall painting, of using color in architecture and form, and an articulation of the visual outcomes from the 1923 exhibition. For the first time it had a theoretical foundation—a document that listed its goals and its possibilities. As examined in the next chapter, those that remained in the wall painting workshop after the exhibition, most prominently

Arndt, continued shifting and adjusting architecture with color. Former student Scheper returned to the Bauhaus in the move to Dessau, and with his experience from his independent freelance work, he took over the workshop. For both Scheper and Arndt the power and importance of color in architecture became central to their theories of wall painting.

Chapter Three

Alfred Arndt and Hinnerk Scheper and the Role of Color in Architecture

On April 24, 1924, the Bauhaus Masters Council officially approved the implementation of the ideas set for in Kandinsky's theoretical, experimental, and technically focused memo for the wall painting workshop, but with an amendment, insisting that it not abandon or devalue productive work.¹ Despite Kandinsky's wishes, the workshop would have to continue to take on wall painting commissions and jobs from outside the school. From 1924 to 1926 Kandinsky withdrew from the workshop in order to focus on his instruction in color, form, and analytical drawing as commissioned wall painting projects gave the students a chance to gain practical experience in the field, to work within both existing architecture and new construction, and to generate income for the still financially struggling school. For wall painting students and teachers, an increased attention to practical matters, such as the wishes of the client and specifics of the building and its functions, helped to shift the workshop's output at the same time as the wall painters were developing their own philosophies about the transformative qualities of color and how to work within and subordinate to architecture.

This chapter examines the development of two distinct approaches to wall painting as the workshop matured from 1924 to 1926, a period in which Alfred Arndt and Hinnerk Scheper emerged as the most influential and prolific Bauhaus wall painters. Two wall painting projects—Haus Auerbach and the Bauhaus Dessau—are excellent examples of these two wall painters'

¹ “daß die theoretische Arbeit der produktiven Arbeit nicht grundsätzlich übergeordnet werden soll, den Meistern der Werkstatt es aber im Einvernehmen mit der Zentrale überlassen bleibt, die produktive Arbeit (Baufträge) selbst zu regeln,” meeting of the Bauhaus masters council, on April 24, 1924, Quoted in Volker Wahl, ed., *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar 1919 bis 1925* (Weimar: Böhlau, 2001), 341.

approaches and are also the best documented and the most accurately restored Bauhaus buildings. Arndt was a newly minted journeyman in the wall painting workshop in Weimar when he designed and painted the wall color scheme of Haus Auerbach in nearby Jena in summer 1924. Scheper, who was appointed leader of the wall painting workshop in 1925, designed and then painted, along with the assistance of the workshop students, the new Bauhaus building in Dessau in fall 1926.

Designed by Walter Gropius, Haus Auerbach and the Bauhaus Dessau are still excellent examples of his architecture even after nearly 70-80 years of neglect, damage and repainting. One is a private residence and the other a public educational institution, but both have been thought to be white, inside and out. While the Bauhaus building in Dessau is often seen as Gropius's greatest achievement, his most famous modernists building, and an icon of the school, Haus Auerbach is little known, scarcely mentioned in Gropius scholarship until its restoration and rediscovery in 1994–1995. For both buildings, their restorations in the 1990s and early 2000s, respectively, have changed the presumption of their whiteness and make it possible to now walk through the colored spaces nearly as they were when they were painted by Arndt and Scheper. The restorations have resulted in more interest in these buildings and their color, although all of the leading scholars have a close emotional connection to the material—they either live or work in the buildings or have a familial relationship to the important figures. Color played a powerful role in the architecture in both projects. Each designer utilized a variety of color and painting techniques, but the results and specifics of their approaches differed. Scheper placed wall painting in a supporting role to architecture and Arndt used wall painting as a support but also a challenge to architecture, transmuting its forms. As this chapter will discuss, their results reveal an evolving and contrasting picture of the wall painting workshop of 1924–

1926. The wall painting workshop did not have a single cohesive approach to painting on the wall, but the individual practitioners, students as well as teachers, used a variety of techniques and approaches that were unified by the knowledge and belief in the importance and power of color in architecture.

Arndt and Scheper were each, for a time, leaders of the Dessau wall painting workshop, Scheper from 1925 to 1933 and Arndt as the interim leader from 1929 to 1931, during Scheper's year long hiatus. Although Scheper was more prominent, Arndt's impact and divergent style provide an important foil, a point of a comparison and critique to Scheper. Unlike the most well known Bauhaus teachers—Gropius, Breuer, Moholy-Nagy or Bayer—Arndt and Scheper did not immigrate to the United States, nor did they have independent easel painting careers like Kandinsky or Paul Klee.² In the context of the post-1923 wall painting workshop, Scheper is most often discussed, as his management of the workshop was long-running and crucial. He also maintained an independent wall painting practice in the 1920s and 1930s, and many of his Bauhaus and non-Bauhaus wall painting plans and drawings have survived. He died in 1957, at the age of 59, and was not present for the 1960s revival of interest in the school, which was fueled by the opening of the Bauhaus Archiv in Darmstadt and the subsequent exhibitions that helped to set the reputations of the Bauhaus masters. The dedication and scholarship of his daughter-in-law, Renate Scheper, contributed significantly to the present knowledge of his work, as well as that of his wife, Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, also a Bauhäusler.³ Renate Scheper's

² Arndt and Scheper are relatively obscure, but there are small focused bodies of literature on each of them.

³ Renate Scheper, *Colourful! The Wallpainting Workshop at the Bauhaus* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2005).

German-language exhibition catalogues, published in 1991 and 2007, respectively, provide a substantial base of knowledge on Scheper and his wall paintings.⁴

Other than these texts little original research or analysis of Scheper's projects exists. Before 2000, scholars generally assumed that Scheper's plans for the Bauhaus school building in Dessau were never implemented, arguing that the designs included too many colors for Gropius, who was presumed to prefer white for his buildings. During the restoration of the Bauhaus building, completed in 2005, Scheper's colors were identified and for the large part, have been restored, a process that prompted a revision of much of the 1980s and 1990s assessment of Scheper's realized and unrealized output. This chapter will continue to correct this viewpoint.⁵ Most scholars, including Renate Scheper, have rightly discussed Scheper's practical, technically based and functional wall paintings, which play a supporting and subordinate role to architecture and lead to simple and subtle designs. They also discussed his comprehensive, methodical instruction, although few discuss any specific projects at length.⁶ The usual emphasis in the literature on functional wall painting was continued by Christian Wolsdorf in the 1988 catalogue *Experiment Bauhaus*, who described Scheper's projects in some detail, but also concluded that his wall paintings were timid, full of gray and white, and generally unlike the revolutionary wall

⁴ Renate Scheper, *Foto, Hinnerk Scheper: Ein Bauhäusler als Bildjournalist in Dessau* (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991); Renate Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper: Farbgestalter, Fotograf, Denkmalpfleger: vom Bauhaus geprägt* (Bramsche: Rasch, 2007). Scheper's research was based on her personal archives, which include letters and notes of Hinnerk Scheper and Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, as well as other sources.

⁵ See: Monika Markgraf, *Archaeology of Modernism: Renovation Bauhaus Dessau* (Berlin: Jovis, 2006); Monika Markgraf, "Farbe in Der Architektur Des Bauhauses Und Der Weissenhofsiedlung," lecture presented at Veranstaltungsreihe von Werkbund, Architekturforum, Architektenkammer, 2007; Monika Markgraf, "Function and Color in the Bauhaus Building in Dessau," in *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 196–98.

⁶ Hans Maria Wingler, *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 466; Howard Dearstyne, *Inside the Bauhaus*, ed. David A Spaeth (New York: Rizzoli, 1986).

colors of Bruno Taut and others of the period.⁷ The rediscovery of Scheper's long unknown wall colors prompts reconsideration of his reduction of wall painting to a supporting and subordinate role in the building. This chapter's thorough analysis of the Dessau building painting is grounded in its specific color effects, using both plans and restored colors. These designs are also considered in relationship to Scheper's writings about wall painting, most notably in his and his wife's essay "Architektur und Farbe" (Architecture and Color), written in 1930 while on sabbatical in the Soviet Union and only recently reprinted.⁸ This chapter will also consider how Scheper developed his wall painting method and philosophy.

Scheper joined the Bauhaus in 1919 and left in spring 1922, just before Kandinsky's appointment, and after his journeymen's test that qualified him as a board certified wall painter. Scheper had developed his approach to wall painting in his lessons and projects with Schlemmer and Itten, from 1919 to 1922, in his pre-Bauhaus training, and through his private practice before returning to the Bauhaus as a "Young Master" in 1925. In many ways, Scheper's wall painting approach contrasts with another important member of the wall painting workshop, Arndt. Arndt, the other most well-known Bauhaus wall painter, was a wall painting student turned independent professional, like Scheper, who then returned to the Bauhaus to teach. One year younger than Scheper, Arndt arrived at the school in winter 1921–1922, two years after Scheper. Accordingly,

⁷ Christian Wolsdorff, "Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei," in *Experiment Bauhaus: Das Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin (West) zu Gast im Bauhaus Dessau*, ed. Peter Hahn, Magdalena Droste, and Jeannine Fiedler (Berlin: Kupfergraben Verlagsgesellschaft, 1988), 282–85. Wulf Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung," in *Bauhaus Utopien: Arbeiten auf Papier*, ed. Wulf Herzogenrath (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1988), 169–88. Herzogenrath focused on the functionality of Scheper's designs, particularly the colors used in a hospital in Münster. The hospital colors were implemented according to the usage of the rooms or his orientation plan for the Bauhaus building in Dessau, in which color was to be used to aid in navigation of the building.

⁸ Hinnerk Scheper and Lou Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe" (1930), in *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012): Dom Narkomfina—das Haus des Volkskommissariates für Finanzen*, ed. Johannes Cramer and Anke Zalivako, 72–74 (Petersberg: Imhof, 2013).

the two wall painters had considerably different wall painting training. Arndt lived almost 20 years longer than Scheper, dying in 1976 at the age of 78, and was an active associate of the new Bauhaus Archiv in the 1960s. He also wrote significantly about his early years at the school.⁹ *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898–1976* (In the Achievement is Beauty: The Bauhaus Master Alfred Arndt, 1898–1976) the catalogue for the 1999 Bauhaus Archiv exhibition, contains the most recent research about Arndt.¹⁰ It includes excerpts from his writings and diary, images of his student works, wall painting plans, and postwar architecture. Wolsdorff’s essay in the catalogue examined Arndt’s entire career, but focused on his time at the Hannes Meyer directed Bauhaus as the leader of the *Aufbau* (interior design) department and on Arndt’s postwar career.¹¹ Earlier essays in the 1991 exhibition catalogue *Alfred Arndt, Gertrud Arndt: Zwei Künstler aus dem Bauhaus*, included very general information about both Arndt’s education at the Bauhaus and Arndt’s architecture, including the wall painting schemes of the 1920s, his 1930s easel paintings, and essays on his wife—Gertrud’s—work.¹²

These exhibition catalogues established Arndt’s body of work as well as his biography, listing projects, some of which were discussed at length, and including primary sources, but they did not analyze the wall paintings significantly. They confirmed basic biographical facts such as

⁹ Hans M. Wingler, ed., *Alfred Arndt: Maler und Architekt* (Darmstadt: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1968). This very 1968 catalogue, which accompanied an exhibition celebrating Arndt’s 70th birthday, is useful for the letters about Arndt by fellow Bauhäuslers like Walter Gropius, who called Arndt, *ein Urbauhäuler* (an original Bauhaus member). The text also reprinted Arndt’s 1925 essay, “new color design of children’s rooms” and his 1964 memoir of his Bauhaus days.

¹⁰ Christian Wolsdorff, ed., *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898–1976* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999).

¹¹ Christian Wolsdorff, “In der höchsten Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt,” in *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898-1976* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999), 7–13.

¹² Gerhard Leistner, ed., *Alfred Arndt, Gertrud Arndt: Zwei Künstler aus dem Bauhaus* (Regensburg: Das Museum, 1991).

that Arndt was born in 1898 in Elbing, Germany and that during World War I he was an engineering and architectural draftsman. He began his artistic training 1919 with a course at his local arts and crafts school in Elbing and then at the Art Academy in Königsberg until 1921, when he started to travel around Germany and apparently stumbled upon the Bauhaus in Weimar.¹³

The best text, thus far, on a specific Arndt project is Barbara Happe and Martin S. Fischer's *Haus Auerbach by Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, an in-depth analysis of the design, construction, ownership, reconstruction, and color design of one project, Haus Auerbach.¹⁴ Like Renate Scheper or Monika Markgraf, the latter a leading researcher on the restoration of the Bauhaus Dessau buildings, the authors of this text have an intimate relationship to their subject. In their case, the building is their home. Although this closeness to their subject can be extremely helpful in gaining access to material and research, it does not always allow for scholarly distance, the ability to step back and think critically about their subject. Happe and Fischer are fearless advocates for their home as an important monument of Gropius's and Arndt's careers and for the history of modern architecture. While they view the wall painting scheme as unique and exemplary, they primarily list the house's colors without carefully analyzing their effect. The text distanced the paintings from other Arndt projects and the wall paintings of Scheper and Oskar Schlemmer. It put the house into the context of polychrome architecture of the 1920s, comparing it briefly to Le Corbusier's use of color or to Theo van Doesburg's de Stijl, but only in passing. The text is part of growing lobby to reverse the idea of whiteness in modern architecture and specifically in the buildings of Gropius.

¹³ Renate Scheper did not add any significant new details or information about Arndt's major projects.

¹⁴ Barbara Happe and Martin S Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, trans. Geoffrey Steinherz (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2003).

In addition to Happe and Fischer, Ulrich Müller also examined Haus Auerbach in his book *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*. It considered at length the Haus Auerbach and its patron, Felix Auerbach in the context of Gropius, Mies and van Doesburg's theories of space, movement, and time.¹⁵ This text's most important contributions, as Kathleen James-Chakraborty has pointed out, are the inclusion of the Haus Auerbach and the discussion of Felix Auerbach.¹⁶ The short section on Arndt's coloration of the Haus Auerbach, titled *Bewegter Raum* (Moving Space), included a discussion of the dematerialization of the living and dining room spaces. The analysis of the wall paintings, the influences and the effects, however, consistently referenced Müller's larger analysis of the issues of space and time in modern architecture, not the wall painting workshop or the rest of Arndt's wall painting projects. In Müller's book, Arndt's agency, goals, theories, and his considerations of light, architectural structure, and function are precariously confused with those of Gropius. These sources provide substantial foundation for a discussion of Arndt, but it is time to see Arndt's wall painting and the Haus Auerbach in the broader context of the wall painting workshop and not as a side note in studies on modern architecture.

This chapter will expand upon and build on the existing literature on Arndt and Scheper in order to compare these two Bauhaus wall painters and their projects. Since substantial literature already exists on the wall paintings schemes for the Masters' Houses in Dessau and the Dessau Törten Housing Estate,¹⁷ I instead concentrate on Haus Auerbach and the Bauhaus

¹⁵ Ulrich Müller, *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004).

¹⁶ Kathleen James-Chakraborty, "Rezension von: Ulrich Müller: Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe," *Sehepunkte* 5, no. 9 (2005), accessed September 5, 2014, <http://www.sehepunkte.de/2005/09/7802.html>.

¹⁷ A substantial body of literature exists on the different wall paintings of the Masters' Houses in Dessau exists. See Axel Drieschner, "Restaurierung Mesiterhaus Feininger von Walter Gropius,

building in Dessau in order to reveal the diversity of wall painting approaches at the school and the varying relationships of color and painting with architecture.

Alfred Arndt

The Haus Auerbach was built by Gropius and Meyer in 1924 for the Jena University physics professor Felix Auerbach and his wife, Anna. Gropius's architectural office commissioned Arndt to design and paint the interior. For decades it was believed that Arndt's planned wall paintings were never implemented. The discovery of original paint fragments proved this assumption false and verified the wall painting scheme. Arndt's complex wall color design continued and expanded upon some of the experimental wall painting strategies of earlier wall painting projects, but also reflected the client. The resulting wall paintings were the first of the post-1923 workshop. They functioned just as Kandinsky identified a few months earlier in his memo: color would enhance the effect of the architecture, but in addition would transmute and transform the architecture into something new. ,

Arndt had been a student in the wall painting workshop since 1922 and at the time of the Auerbach project he was a newly certified journeyman. He first encountered the Bauhaus in 1921, when he came across Henry van de Velde's distinctive Weimar art school buildings while traveling through Germany. He was invited in, and an old friend from the war declared, "man,

Dessau," in *Architektur jahrbuch, 1996*, ed. Annette Becker and Wilfried Wang (Munich: Prestel, 1996); August Gebessler, ed., *Gropius, Meisterhaus Muche/Schlemmer: Die Geschichte einer Instandsetzung* (Stuttgart: Krämer, 2003); Gabriele Kolber, *Leben am Bauhaus: Die Meisterhäuser in Dessau* (Munich: Bayerische Vereinsbank, 1993); Norbit Michels, *Architekture und Kunst: Das Meisterhaus Kandinsky-Klee in Dessau* (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 2000); Wolfgang Thöner, *The Bauhaus Life: Life and Work in the Masters' Houses Estate in Dessau* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 2003). The Dessau Törten project will be discussed in the next chapter.

you're going to stay right here, this is where we belong. This is the place—you'll see!"¹⁸ He was admitted to the Bauhaus based on the portfolio of work he carried with him.¹⁹ After completing his preliminary courses, Arndt was first assigned to the ceramics workshop in Dornburg by Itten. Arndt however, wanted to be a painter and he left the ceramics workshop and joined the wall painting workshop by summer 1922.²⁰

In early 1922, Arndt took a break from his studies and traveled to Italy with a fellow Bauhäusler, Ernst Gebhardt.²¹ In Rome, they visited the Sistine Chapel and spent hours lying on a bench looking up at Michelangelo's great fresco. Arndt much later remembered saying to his friend, "Do you think anyone today could manage to produce a thing like that? And is it really today's task to create things like that? Isn't the expression of our times completely different?" Both Bauhaus students decided, " 'Let us affirm today!' Back to Weimar! Back to the Bauhaus."²² Although he was enamored of the Bauhaus before leaving for Italy, Arndt's trip made him realize the urgency and contemporaneity of the Bauhaus project as compared to the art of the past. It seems no coincidence that in front of one of the most famous wall paintings in history, Arndt had the realization that he could make a type of wall painting for his time.

¹⁸ "mensch, du bleibst hier, hier passen wir hin, hier ist es in ordnung, du wirst staunen!" In 1964 Arndt wrote a short essay, "wie ich an das bauhaus in weimar kam..." The essay was originally published in Wingler, *Alfred Arndt: Maler und Architekt*, 9. The English edition was published as: Alfred Arndt, "How I Got to the Bauhaus in Weimar," in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People; Personal Opinions and Recollections of Former Bauhaus Members and Their Contemporaries*, ed. Eckhard Neumann, trans. Eva Richter and Alba Lorman (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970), 59.

¹⁹ Many of his descriptions of his time at the Bauhaus were written during the large revival of interest in the school following the opening of the Bauhaus Archiv in Darmstadt in 1960, Arndt's postwar home, and in coordination with a number of Bauhaus exhibitions.

²⁰ Arndt is listed in the Masters Council Meeting notes as a probationary member of the ceramics workshop on April 7, 1922. It is unclear exactly when he moved to the wall painting workshop. Wahl, *Die Meisterratsprotokolle des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar*, 170.

²¹ Arndt, "How I Got to the Bauhaus in Weimar." See also Wolsdorff, *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit*.

²² Arndt, "How I Got to the Bauhaus in Weimar," 59.

Arndt's wall painting would be very different from Michelangelo's epic work, without the narrative, figures, and pictorial imagery of traditional wall paintings or frescos, and instead steeped in modern architecture and color theory.

Oskar Schlemmer was the Master of Form when Arndt joined the wall painting workshop, and Schlemmer and his students were working on or had just completed the painting of the Jena Municipal Theater (discussed in chapter one). The project should have been a unified artistic achievement of the workshops; however, in Arndt's opinion the project had not achieved this end: "Art (as) heightened craft was not demonstrated here."²³ The disagreement between Schlemmer and Gropius, which resulted in the whitewashing of Schlemmer's wall paintings at the theater, had an impact on the young Arndt. He learned that the wall painter must have a good relationship with and deference to the architect, especially Gropius. As Arndt was settling into the wall painting workshop, the new Master of Form, Kandinsky, arrived at the Bauhaus. Arndt would become a prominent member of Kandinsky's workshop, and his wall painting approach and strategy at the Bauhaus was formed in these few short years under Kandinsky's leadership.

A few early works, student exercises for his course work, and a handful of surviving oil paintings help illustrate Arndt's development leading up to his first significant project, the Haus Auerbach. One version of Kandinsky's famous 1923 color survey in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin is thought to be the copy filled out by Arndt, or his future-wife Gertrud (figure 2.20). Completed just as Kandinsky would have wanted, with the yellow triangle, red square, and blue circle, it included a handwritten passage: "The blue of the circle: harmonious unity, fervent composure; the yellow of the triangle: restlessness, like a upward blazing flame; red of the

²³ "kunst (als) gesteigertes handwerk fand hier keine demonstration." Wolsdorff, *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit*, 74.

square: sharp, wide, massive phalanx ready for defense.”²⁴ If this is Arndt’s personal survey then he was, for the most part, regurgitating the teaching of Kandinsky and associating colors with other stimuli—sound, feelings, and images. Although Kandinsky’s color theory and wall painting instruction was critical to Arndt, Kandinsky was not the only source of theory and lessons in color. Itten had also taught color in Arndt’s preliminary course and other Bauhaus instructors added their own ideas and lessons.

Another color study, a color wheel, survives from Arndt’s class with Master Gertrud Grunow (figure 3.1). A watercolor and pencil sketch from 1922 hints that Arndt was developing a personal color palette (figure 3.2). It was painted while Arndt was traveling through Italy, between completing his preliminary course and enrolling in the wall painting workshop. In it, Italian cities have been essentialized and cubified, reduced to a type of cityscape reminiscent of Picasso’s or Braque’s early cubist paintings from the south of France. Each of the sides of the cubic buildings are painted in a different color, subtle light blue-greens, rosy terracotta, and shades of brown and tan. These early works reveal an interest in color and architecture and an ability to use color to create and manipulate three-dimensional forms. The colors in these early student works—the yellows, blues, and soft pastel tones—will be used again in the Haus Auerbach wall paintings a few years later.

Arndt was very active in the wall painting workshop as an apprentice, but the workshop did not accomplish much in the year following the frantic summer of 1923, when numerous wall paintings were completed for the large Bauhaus exhibition. Arndt had worked on many of the

²⁴ “Das Blau des Kreises: harmonische Geschlossenheit, inbrünstige Sammlung. Das Gelb des Dreiecks: Unruhe, wie eine nach oben lodernde Flamme. Rot des Quadrats: stechend, breite wuchtige Phalanx zur Abwehr bereit.” *Questionnaire of the Wall Painting Workshop, Filled in by an Unknown Hand*, lithograph, pencil and colored crayon, 1923 1922, Inv.nr. 991, Bauhaus Archiv Berlin.

experimental paintings on the walls of the workshop studio. As discussed in chapter two, Arndt's wall paintings with Josef Maltan for the Haus am Horn were subtle and difficult to reimagine and restore, but were an important precursors for the Haus Auerbach. In the Haus am Horn wall color scheme, the two painters used understated colors to push and transform the space and to emphasize changes in architecture with color. In particular, they used bands of color, much like a frieze, and Arndt was able to experiment with the ability of paint and color to create an illusion, to modify one's interpretation of a wall surface. Unfortunately, preparatory plans for these projects were not used or have not survived. In the restoration, the original colors of the Haus am Horn could be conclusively determined; therefore, the Haus Auerbach is the first well-documented example of Arndt's wall painting and wall color scheme approach.

Haus Auerbach was Arndt's most significant and important project to date, his first independent, non-student commission. It was also a crucial project for architects Gropius and Meyer (figure 3.3). Despite being largely forgotten for decades after its completion, the house was an important follow up to the Gropius firm's renovation of the Jena Municipal Theater and a precursor to the renovation of the Dessau Bauhaus buildings. Its owners, Felix and Anna Auerbach, were progressive intellectual Jews who, because of illness and a sense of the growing threat to their way of life, committed suicide in 1933. Their story and that of their house is the subject of *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*.²⁵ Published in 2003 in both German and English, this critical 2003 book is a scholarly project of a cultural historian—Happe, and a scientist—Fischer, but it is also a record of the renovation and history of their home in Jena, Germany. They bought the Haus Auerbach in the early 1990s and in 1994–95 carried out a complete restoration, re-establishing, as close as possible, the state of the 1924 building. Their

²⁵ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*.

detailed research provided the basis for my own discussion of their home, as does my own firsthand experience of the restored wall painting scheme.

They have rightly claimed that the Haus Auerbach is a missing link in the scholarship on Gropius's career. It was his first Bauhaus style building, which he completed two years before the new Bauhaus in Dessau. Happe and Fischer discussed in detail the house's architectural structure and features, such as the two interlocking cubes that form the body of the house. The construction details are carefully noted, including the innovative Jurko building method, which consisted of walls constructed of layered sheets of slag concrete that were easy and efficient to build with and provided good insulation.²⁶ They also discussed the Auerbachs, who hired Gropius in late 1923 or early 1924 to build them a new single family home. This couple's story is fascinating and Happe and Fischer dive into their biographies. They were great supporters of the arts in Jena and even commissioned a portrait of Felix Auerbach from Edvard Munch in 1906, which was hung in the new house (figure 3.4).²⁷

The Auerbachs had many points of contact with the Bauhaus and modern art circles of the region, which led to them hire Gropius's firm to build their new home, although the circumstances of the initial meeting of Gropius and the Auerbachs are unknown.²⁸ By spring 1924, planning was underway. Gropius's firm associate Adolf Meyer submitted building permits

²⁶ Ibid., 34–38.

²⁷ In 1927, Felix Auerbach sent Munch a postcard of the exterior of the house, which was marked with an X to indicate the position of the painting on the interior. Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 77.

²⁸ Ulrich Müller discussed in great depth the almost unknown Felix Auerbach essay from 1924. "Tonkunst und bildende Kunst vom Standpunkte des Naturforschers" (Art of Music and Visual Art from the Standpoint of the Scientist), which gave the scientist's interpretation of modern physics and art. Müller's essay also analysed Auerbach's influence on issues of space-time on the Bauhaus as well as in terms of his own house. Müller therefore made a vital and fascinating connection between the homeowners and Gropius's developing ideas about space-time and architecture. Müller, *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit Im Werk Von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*.

to the city on April 15 and by May 12 the permits were granted, although there was some opposition from the community against such a modern building. Construction began immediately and by July 30, led by Ernst Neufert, an employee in Gropius's firm, the rough construction was completed, and the house was completely finished by October 31, 1924.²⁹ The result was one of Gropius's first buildings with a flat roof, cubic forms, and mass-produced construction elements like the use of the Jurko blocks. Essentially, as Happe and Fischer have discussed, the building is composed of two interlocking rectangular blocks, related to the honeycomb designs that Gropius exhibited at the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition (figure 3.5). On the ground floor, the south block contains the living areas: office, dining room, and music room. The north side includes the housekeeping areas: kitchen and bathroom. The simple façade is without ornament or decoration, and the flat roof was meant for drying laundry. The construction process, materials, and payment etc., were all well researched by Happe and Fischer, who uncovered letters from Felix Auerbach complaining about the cost of construction and receipts for payments to Arndt and Bauhaus wall painting workshop apprentice Hans Volger.³⁰

Colors in Space at Haus Auerbach

In spring or summer 1924, Arndt was hired by Gropius's architectural firm to create a color scheme for the interior of the Auerbach commission. Arndt ended up developing a set of detailed and sensitive color plans for the building, now in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin (figures 3.6–3.7).³¹ The first plan depicts the ground floor in mostly pastel tones with the exception of a

²⁹ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 46–48.

³⁰ Volger was a student in the wall painting workshop from spring 1924 until he passed the journeyman's exam in winter 1924-25. *Ibid.*, 47, 126; Winkler, "The Workshop for Wall Painting at the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar," 128.

³¹ The two large, framed plans are made with ink and tempera on thin tracing paper, which was cut out and glued to the illustration board. The plans depict the ground floor and the second floor

few red highlights on the ceiling of the entryway and the trim around the doors in the dining room. In addition to a small floor plan, three of the rooms—those with the most complex designs—the dining room, music room, and office, are given more detailed individual illustrations. In order to depict the colors of the walls and ceiling of a given space, all three of these rooms are shown using a common illustration strategy of the wall painting workshop, the reflected ceiling plan with elevations. This type of drawing depicts the ceiling at center, as if reflected in a mirror on the floor of the room, and the walls out to the side. In this case the bottoms of the walls are adjacent to the reflected ceiling. These plans could be difficult to understand; therefore, to help with interpretation Arndt often included perspective views of individual rooms.

The plan for the second floor includes detailed drawings for two guest rooms, the master bedroom, and the staircase landing, as well as reflected ceiling plans with elevations, and a bird's-eye perspective drawing of the master bedroom. Due to the amount of detail in the plan and the intimate use of the space, the master bedroom must have been of great concern for the Auerbachs as Arndt continued the blue and pastel palette of the ground floor. In the perspective Arndt also included depictions of two single beds and two rugs, which are typical of Bauhaus designs of the time—geometric and abstract.

An exact date for Arndt's finished plans is unknown; it is unclear if he developed them before or after completion of the initial construction phase of the house or if anyone at the firm had influence over the design. Little is known about the working relationship of Gropius, his firm, and Arndt. The only hint is from much later. In 1968 Arndt recalled, "When I received the contract to paint Haus Auerbach from Grop(sic), Neufert was the construction director at the

of the home, respectively, and include views of interior spaces as well as ceiling plan elevations. Each plan contains an identification key, which indicates the ceiling color of each room.

time. So we drove over, I with my picture folder, and showed it to the wife and the prof., they found them very pretty, Grop(sic) did not take a position.”³² From this short comment it may seem as if Gropius was either uninterested in the interior color scheme or had already approved of it. However, at that same meeting Gropius showed Arndt the new beams under the winter garden on the east side of the house. Gropius wanted the house to have the effect of a floating box and was unhappy with these additional supports. Arndt recalled Gropius saying, “They must be treated with color so that they are not seen.”³³ The general sense of the remembered interaction is that Gropius was more concerned with the exterior appearance of the building, and the way that color and paint could enhance or correct the building, rather than with the interior colors.³⁴

Arndt’s recollection of the process also indicates that he visited the house before starting the painting and could have made adjustments to the plans. If that was the case, it may explain, in part, some of the differences between the finished drawing and the realized painting and reconstructed wall colors. Arndt returned to Jena at some point in fall 1924 with wall painting

³² “als ich das haus auerbach in auftrag bekam von grop anzumalen, neufert war damals bauführer. wir sind also hingefahren, ich mit meinen bilderbogen, den haben wir der frau und dem herrn prof gezeigt. die fanden das sehr schön, grop bezog gar kein feld.” Arndt, “Typed Written Notes (1968) provided by Mrs. Alexandra Bormann-Arndt, daughter of Arndt,” quoted in Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 124–25. Also included in Alfred Arndt, “erinnerungen an das bauhaus,” in *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898-1976*, ed. Christian Wolsdorff (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999), 74.

³³ “diesen balkon da vorn mit den stützen, die wir leider machen mussten, das müssen sie farbig so behandeln, dass sie nicht zu sehen sind.” Alfred Arndt, “erinnerungen an das bauhaus, (1968)” in *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898-1976*, ed. Christian Wolsdorff (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999), 74.

³⁴ Müller, *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*, 154. In his research Müller, got the distinct impression that Gropius was hands-off regarding the interior wall color scheme.

student Hans Volger and his painting supplies to complete the job.³⁵ Restorers have discovered that Arndt closely followed his original plans, except for a few changes. For example, the colors of the plan are in some cases slightly different from the extant fragments. The restoration process also revealed Arndt's interior painting technique. A lime ground, or base layer, was applied to the wet plaster, like a fresco. This acted as a primer and firmed the wall surface for further layers of bright color.³⁶ In the restoration, this technique was too difficult, expensive, and fragile to duplicate. Therefore the paint company KEIM developed replica paints for the interior by matching the discovered remains of the original and consulting the plans, and then hand mixing colors with a silicone product.³⁷

Happe and Fischer discussed Arndt's wall color scheme at length, and argued that this building is the best example of colorful Bauhaus architecture. At the time of the restoration and the publication of their book, the Haus Auerbach was the only wall painting workshop project for which the original plans survived that could be confirmed by restoration analysis. It still remains one of the most important, but since the mid-1990s more and more restorations have been completed, including those in Dessau. Happe and Fischer also claimed that in this building's renovation "a lost authenticity was revived."³⁸ Although every effort was made in the restoration to be as accurate as possible, one must always remember that these are not Arndt's original paintings but recreations. Caution should be used when referring to them, for they may not truly reflect and identically recreate the original. One reason is that the type of paint, especially its

³⁵ Happe and Fischer cited a discussion with Arndt's daughter, Alexandra Bormann-Arndt, in which she recalled her father doing the painting himself to earn extra income. Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 127.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

³⁷ Gabriele Betz, *Walter Gropius und Alfred Arndt: Villa Auerbach in Jena*, vol. 6, *Erhalten und Gestalten* (Keimfarben, 2003).

³⁸ Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 123.

glossy or matte appearance, was extremely important to the overall effect—and this was lost in the restoration. As I will discuss below, both Arndt and his colleague Scheper were extremely interested in technique and different wall painting mediums.

Despite all these caveats, Haus Auerbach is a magnificent example of Bauhaus wall painting. Not only is its restoration important for the disclosure of colorful architecture and Gropius's oeuvre, but also the commission materialized at an important moment for the workshop and for Arndt in particular. The project was the first large commission after the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition and before the move to Dessau, and it reflects the lingering presence of Kandinsky's teachings and his memo about wall painting from a few months earlier. Arndt aimed very clearly to work within the architecture as well as to shape it, change it, and enhance it with color. His assertive color scheme in the main living spaces included painting almost every wall and ceiling surface a bright (non-white) color. The most public and innovative color schemes in the building are in the public living areas in the south cube of the house: the *herrenzimmer* (office), music room, and dining room. In these rooms, Arndt developed a colorful, subtle, and overall harmonious wall painting system. Other spaces have significant coloration, including the hallway and staircase as well as the bedrooms on the second floor, but for the most part they are related to the themes and colors established on the first floor.

The heart of the home was the music room, today used as a living room (figure 3.8). Large windows span almost the entire length of the south exterior wall. On the west wall, a doorway leads up a few steps to the office. On the east wall, glass sliding doors provide a separation between the dining room, but also allow easy vision and light to move from one space to the other so that these two spaces act in some ways like one. In both the plan and in the restoration, most of the walls and ceiling are painted a single turquoise color. Breaking up the

turquoise is a one-meter-wide band of light yellow the width of the wall between the edge of windows on the south wall and the corner of the west wall. The yellow band extends up from the south wall and onto the ceiling where it skirts the edge of the room, paralleling the west wall, turns around the north west corner, and continues along the north edge of the ceiling, and down onto the narrow east wall that separates the living and dining room (figure 3.10). In the plan, the band also extends down from the ceiling onto the west and north walls about a foot, creating a kind of frieze, but this frieze feature was not carried out in the restoration.³⁹ In the reconstruction of the music room, the slimmer, frieze-less, yellow ceiling band does a number of things to the effect of space: it both enhances and makes more visible the inherent architectural features and dimensions of the room, but it also transforms and complicates, in a way, defying the architecture of the space.

Happe and Fischer's book viewed the colors in relationship to the larger structure of the architecture. They noted that brightly colored areas are often located in the overlapping juncture of the two large cubic blocks that comprise the overall structure of the house. This is visible in the section of the light yellow band on the north side of the music room, which is also part of the north block of the house overlapping with the south. They argued that these changes in color correspond to the architectural strategy and structure of Gropius's interpenetrated cubic forms. Müller, in his discussion of the house, however, argued that, Arndt, unlike Scheper, was not urgently concerned with expressing the facts of the construction and engineering structure of the building. Scheper, for example, emphasized the load bearing and non-load bearing walls of the space.⁴⁰ I agree with Müller that Arndt did not adhere to Scheper's later approach.⁴¹ Standing in

³⁹ No paint fragments were discovered to verify its existence. *Ibid.*, 133.

⁴⁰ Müller, *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*, 158.

the spaces, I found that the immediacy of colors and the rooms do not result in a rumination of the meta aspects of the house's design. The two overlapping blocks of the building's design are only noticeable on the ground plan of the building, in an abstract and detached way, but not when physically moving through the spaces. Arndt was not overly concerned with expressing Gropius's idealized architectural form, but more focused on creating real spaces to live in.

The color scheme brings the viewer's attention to the architecture of the room. As previously mentioned, the yellow band is the same width as the wall between the windows and corner of the south and west walls. The band is almost the same length as the solid section of the east wall, between the sliding glass door and the north corner of the room. The band connecting these two points creates a frame for an almost perfect square of turquoise on the ceiling (which measures 4 x 3.8 meters).⁴² The yellow acts to highlight the windows, both the exterior and interior walls of glass. It creates the appearance that the windows on the south exterior wall are the same length as the sliding glass doors between the music and dining room. This perception, however, is not accurate, since the width of the door to the dining room is twenty centimeters shorter than the windows. But without the colors one would probably not notice the similar relationship of scale. The colors, then, slightly correct the inexact dimensions of the room and the paint enhances the subtle design of the space.

Arndt's design, however, not only emphasizes the already inherently interesting dimensions of the rooms, but also produces its own interesting illusions, defying the architecture and the flat and unbroken wall or ceiling surfaces. When one is in the space looking up, the strip of yellow seems to move, like a Josef Albers' painting, pushing and pulling. The yellow extends

⁴¹ Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe," in *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012): Dom Narkomfina - das Haus des Volkskommissariates für Finanzen*, ed. Johannes Cramer and Anke Zalivako (Petersberg: Imhof, 2013), 72–74.

⁴² Happe and Fischer, *Haus Auerbach of Walter Gropius with Adolf Meyer*, 133.

out towards us, the turquoise pushes back. It gives the illusion that there is a soffit or recess in the ceiling—some kind of architectural feature—where there is none. These color relationships are subjective and each viewer might sense a different effect; nevertheless, the paint seems to do two things—solidify the already established architecture as well as transform it.

The turquoise square on the ceiling and its correspondence to the geometric aspects of the room's design act to partition off the south-east corner of the room, creating the sense of a cube of space within the box of the room. The yellow band on the ceiling demarcates the exterior edge of the room, or exterior cubic space. The use of a square painted on the ceiling in order to define a separate area of the room was used about a year earlier in Gropius's office in the Weimar Bauhaus building. As discussed in the previous chapter, Gropius's office was designed as a cube within a cube. The exterior cubic space included his desk and workspace and is distinguished from an interior space by a sofa and chairs, and a bright yellow square painted on the ceiling directly over the central cube. At the corner of the exterior cube, the walls were highlighted with a band of the same yellow over a gray wall color. An innovative wire light fixture provided a more physical boundary between exterior and interior cube and, along with the furniture, the room created a total work of art.

The wall color scheme for Gropius's office was implemented by the wall painting workshop under the supervision of Beberniss in summer 1923, but it is unknown who came up with the design (figure 2.37).⁴³ I believe that the wall painting workshop students were the primary designers of the wall colors, although Gropius may have provided a general design

⁴³ Winkler and Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer: Geschichte und Rekonstruktion des Direktorenraumes am Staatlichen Bauhaus in Weimar 1923/24*. In his book, Klaus-Jürgen Winkler argued that Gropius must have been the central designer of the room and its effects, although there is little evidence for this. The wall painting students, including Herbert Bayer, who produced the well-known axiomatic lithograph of the room, were certainly included in the planning of the space, and perhaps also in selecting the color

concept for the room. Like the other workshops that made elements for the space—the weavers or furniture makers—the wall painters developed their own solutions and must have been given significant creative freedom. This kind of creative autonomy seems to have also been given to Arndt for Haus Auerbach. Given the similar effects of Gropius’s office and the Haus Auerbach music room one might suppose that Arndt may have been involved in the office, a year earlier in Weimar.

Although following on the heels of the earlier project, the Haus Auerbach was different in certain respects. Unlike Gropius’s office, designed as a total work and an ideal space, in which colors, furniture, lighting, and textiles all worked together, the Haus Auerbach was a functioning home. The owners did not commission Bauhaus furniture to fill their new house, but instead used their own eclectic traditional furniture and decorations. The only period photograph of the interior, a view facing the northwest corner of the music room, shows a low sofa and armchair, a table stacked with books, and traditional dining room chairs set around it (figure 3.11). On the walls are two figurative oil paintings in large ornate frames, one a family portrait in a traditional perhaps naïve style, the other painting too dark to make out. (The south window wall, where Munch’s portrait of Felix Auerbach hung, is not pictured in this view.) On the floor is a large, traditional rug. These furnishings are far from Bauhaus-type designs. Therefore, in this room and presumably in the whole house, the wall and ceiling colors as well as the architecture itself needed to hold its own against this onslaught of tradition. The paint needed to do more than in Gropius’s office or in the Haus am Horn; it needed to remind the inhabitant, perhaps even declare, that he or she was now in new, modernist architecture.

One may get a sense of the dynamic colors and the power that these bright and very non-traditional colors would have had in the room in a new image, in which turquoise is

superimposed onto the period photograph (figure 3.12). Since no contemporary accounts of the room exist, it is unclear what effect the older furnishings had in the brightly colored rooms. In this superimposed image, the colors seem a bit jarring. I suspect that the colors were one of the elements that made this home feel different from others in the neighborhood. Even today, aided by the sparse, modernist furniture of the new owners, which allows for a fuller appreciation of the wall colors, the restored home still feels quite radical. For Arndt, the colors had to stand up to the distraction of the traditional furnishings and work with and against the architecture. The colors also had to fit the use of the space as a music room. Such bright colors would have made for a social and lively heart of the home.

Right next to the music room is the dining room (figure 3.13). The rooms are separated by white sliding glass doors. The color palettes in the two rooms are related, but the dining room also has its own distinct effects and mood. The colors are a little warmer, a little cozier. Most of the ceiling is painted a light gray-blue and this color extends from the edge of the sliding glass doors, matching the change of ceiling color in the music room, and expanding to the south exterior wall. The gray-blue then creeps slightly down the south wall in a narrow band similar to a frieze, as had been planned in the music room. The gray-blue frieze continues over the windows on both sides. In contrast to the gray-blue on the ceiling, the greater part of the south wall is painted with what I call orange sherbet—a light orange. This orange sherbet is repeated on the other side of the room. The north wall and the adjoining sections of the ceiling and east and west walls, are also orange sherbet, creating the effect of a niche on the northern side of the room (figure 3.14).

In Arndt's plan this type of sherbet niche is not indicated. Rather, the north wall is the same gray-blue as the ceiling and the sherbet color—lighter in the plan—is only a wide band on

the ceiling and the east wall. Also, in the plan, moldings on the edges of the window and the door are bright red. Again no clear explanation exists for the differences between the plan and what was found on site. Perhaps when Arndt presented the plan to the Auerbachs they had comments and made changes, or when Arndt was working in the space certain effects and colors seemed to work better than others. Whatever the reason, the red stripes in the dining room were left out and the north side of the room was separated from the rest with an orange-sherbet colored paint. As in the music room, the dining room ceiling color helps to highlight the dimension of the windows. The colors outline the existing architecture and make us notice the similarities of the banks of windows on either side of the room.

In his analysis Müller discussed the effect of dematerialization, with the walls dissolving, created by the glass sliding doors leading out to the winter garden and the glass exterior walls.⁴⁴ He pointed out that the colors highlight the windows, and add a sense of transparency. However, I found that the colors also draw the eye away from the windows to the solid walls. The colors create an illusion of architectural features when there are none. The orange sherbet expands and dynamically complicates the space. The sherbet pushes out beyond the north wall niche and is repeated on the south, creating a link between these two ends of the room. It creates the feeling that once the two sherbet-colored areas were one, but some kind of architectonic force, like tectonic plates of the earth, pushed a once entirely sherbet space apart with the distance between them spanned by the gray-blue. When experiencing these dynamic effects—the pushing and pulling of the physical features of the room—windows and doors almost disappear. In the dining room, these spatial effects also create a more intimate space, more closed in as compared to the bright music room next door.

⁴⁴ Müller, *Raum, Bewegung und Zeit im Werk von Walter Gropius und Ludwig Mies van der Rohe*, 158.

Despite their different colors and different uses, the music room and dining room should be considered two components of one unit rather than separate rooms (figure 3.15). The sliding glass doors almost entirely open the two rooms up to one another and even when closed, they provide are a transparent barrier. The light pastels colors of the two spaces are similar; they all could be sherbet or ice cream flavors. The color combinations—gray-blue and light orange, turquoise and light yellow—are sets of complementary colors, neighbors of blues and yellow on the color wheel. Arndt used the ceiling paintings to delineate the spaces, to highlight the cubic aspects of both rooms’ architecture, and to relate the exterior windows to the interior doors. The paintings also shift and transform the basic geometry of the rooms—the basic boxes are pushed and pulled with color, creating niches, recesses, and soffits. Similar to the dining room’s sherbet-colored niche, the living room’s turquoise ceiling and outer north and west walls seem to want to join together, but the yellow band pushes them apart, breaking up a once uniformly consistent turquoise room. Space is being stretched and transformed, color and paint seem to be manipulating the architecture.

The way in which the music and dining rooms open onto one another and the links between the coloration of the spaces invites comparison with another noted house of 1924, Gerrit Rietveld’s Schröder House in Utrecht, the Netherlands (figure 3.16). Rietveld’s building and the interior in particular, with a significant contribution of the owner Truus Schröder, is a colorful flexible space, where walls can be moved and furniture folded up and rearranged to transform a small second floor into living room, bedrooms and dining room.⁴⁵ Rietveld, as architect, furniture designer and colorist, used red, yellow, and blue along with grays, black, and white as

⁴⁵ Paul Overy, *The Rietveld Schröder House* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988); Alice T. Friedman and Maristella Casciato, “Family Matters: The Schröder House, by Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder,” in *Women and the Making of the Modern House: A Social and Architectural History*, ed. Alice T. Friedman (New York: Abrams, 1998), 64–91.

active elements, but with a different kind of logic and cohesion than Arndt. Arndt applied color to fairly traditional rectangular spaces, breaking the planes of the walls and ceilings with bands of color. In the Schröder House interior, one rarely notices solid blank wall surfaces and sees shifting and transforming wall planes instead.

Every inch of space was useful for Schröder and her family. Along with the built in furniture, the bright, primary colors on walls, on furniture, or on the floor, do not transform or change the architecture but are integral to it. The square of red on the floor demarcates a bedroom space when the walls are closed, but when the wall are open the red becomes part of an overall color composition of the open concept second floor. The Schröder house was colored by the architect creating a total work, while Haus Auerbach was a collaboration between architect and wall painter. In Haus Auerbach, Arndt applied color to Meyer and Gropius's building, using color to shape spaces without moving walls or producing all-new furniture as Rietveld had done. Each client, the older Auerbachs and the young single mother Schröder who was a significant collaborator with Rietveld, required different types of spaces. Lastly, Rietveld used the bright primary colors of de Stijl, but Arndt, as a trained painter and colorist, developed a singular color palette for his building, using subtly mixed colors appropriate to the space and the clients.

Arndt was very in tune with how the colors would and could affect space and how they would work in conjunction with occupants's feelings and use of the rooms. In 1925, he discussed the effect of color on the inhabitants of children's home in nearby Roda.⁴⁶ Little is known about the details of this project except that Arndt made wall color plans for the home and care center,

⁴⁶ Alfred Arndt, "neue farbige gestaltung von kinderräumen (1925)," in *Alfred Arndt: Maler und Architekt*, ed. Hans M. Wingler (Darmstadt: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1968). There seem to be two different versions of this manuscript, one published in 1968 and another slightly different one in Arndt's personal papers to which I have not gained access. It is unclear why there would be differences between them.

which was used for children with mental disabilities and funded by the Thuringian state government (figure 3.17). Surviving evidence for this project includes a description of the wall painting by Arndt and a few finished wall painting plans, preserved in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin.⁴⁷ In “*neue farbige gestaltung von kinderräumen*” (new color design of children’s rooms), Arndt described the typical wall design of children’s playrooms and daycare centers as having light, monotonous white walls, the lower portion of which were painted with an oil-based paint and the upper portion of which were stenciled with a frieze of animals, flowers, and children. Feeling that children quickly become disinterested in the usual figurative design, Arndt explained that “boredom sets in, because the children and animals [of the stenciled frieze] did not move, they remained dead and did not stimulate the imagination of the childhood soul in the slightest; on the contrary, this type of painting paralyzed.”⁴⁸ To counter this typical ennui and to stimulate the souls of the children, Arndt wanted “to find a more vivid and more varied solution,” adding: “Thus I had selected the color scale of yellow-red-blue, in order to makes the space fun and friendly, so that the child feels comfortable and is brought into a cheerful mood.”⁴⁹ The colors, Arndt believed, could excite children and shape their states of mind. Arndt also

⁴⁷ These plans for the children’s home are in the format now common to Arndt’s wall painting work, the reflected ceiling plans with elevations. They show the children’s play room, two hallways, and the residence of Frau Noack. Attached to the plans for the play room and the hallway are two black-and-white photographs of the finished painted spaces.

⁴⁸ “langeweile trat ein, den kinder und tiere bewegten sich nicht, sie bleiben tot und regten die phantasie der kindlichen seele nicht in geringsten an; im gegenteil, diese art von ausmalung wirkte lähmend.” Arndt, “*neue farbige gestaltung von kinderräumen*.”

⁴⁹ “versuchte ich eine lebendigere und abwechslungsreichere lösung zu finden...die farbskala gelb-rot-blau habe ich so gewählt, daß sie den raum lustig und freundlich macht, so daß sich das kind wohlfühlt und in heitere stimmung gebracht wird.” Ibid.

considered the habits and behavior of children and encouraged their creativity by adhering chalkboard panels to the walls where the children could draw.⁵⁰

In the Roda children's home, Arndt was not only concerned with mood and use but also with the architecture of the building. In his description he noted, "I attained a colored division, which was produced by the spatial conditions—windows, doors, fireplace surrounds, radiators and so on."⁵¹ These immovable architectural elements, the inherent properties of a space, were incorporated into the design, just as he had done in 1923 in his fresco with Josef Maltan on the walls of the wall painting workshop studio, in which a radiator was incorporated in the painting. In Roda, another example of this approach can be identified in the children's playroom, where the corner projects out into the room, perhaps because of duct work or a structural support. In the plan, and in the attached black-and-white photograph, it is clear that Arndt highlighted and accentuated the protrusion by painting it shades of orange (figure 3.17). Sunlight and windows were also concerns for Arndt: "The ceiling and the walls, which immediately receive the light, are painted light-reflecting white and yellow."⁵² He also closely considered the form and placement of the windows, as well as their illuminative effects in the planning of this space.⁵³ In Haus Auerbach, the windows and doors prompted the division of spaces, and structured the design in both the music and dining rooms. From Arndt's 1923 designs to the 1925 Roda

⁵⁰ The oil paint, which he referenced as the material of earlier children's rooms, is difficult to draw or paint on, and therefore a special matte blackboard surface would be clearly designated for that use. Ibid.

⁵¹ [ich gelangte zu einer] farbigen aufteilung, welche durch die räumlichen verhältnisse—fenster, türen, kaminvorbau, heizkörper usw.—geben war." Ibid.

⁵² "die decke und die wände, welche unmittelbar das licht empfangen, sind lichtreflektierend weiß und gelb gestrichen." Ibid.

⁵³ The windows were also an element of the design. The white rectangle on the ceiling as noted by the plan, is contingent on the architecture. It aligns with the window edge and the door on the opposite wall.

children's home, architectural features like windows and radiators provided him with a built-in structure to emphasize, highlight, and extend beyond.

Many of the concerns of a children's playroom were not relevant to Haus Auerbach—the home of a childless older couple—but the same issues of mood and the use of the spaces must have been part of Arndt's color selection and surfaces effects for the Jena home. The colors of the Haus Auerbach were not designed to stimulate children's imaginations, but rather create a more sophisticated atmosphere for a very intellectual couple. As in Roda the shape of the building was a primary concern and largely drove the wall painting concepts, highlighting and defining the space. Just as in Roda with his goal of stimulating the children's imagination, Arndt's wall paintings in the Haus Auerbach went beyond the strict architectural framework and explore the possibilities and meaning of color.

Arndt's file at the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin presents more evidence of his interest in the relationship of color and mood and the power of color in architectural space. It includes Arndt's small 1924 notebook, in which he recorded very detailed descriptions and recipes for many different pigments and paint colors, and an essay by an unknown author titled *Farbe im Raum: Altmeister Goethes Untersuchungen* (Color in Space: Goethe's Old Master Examination).⁵⁴ This essay argued that color was an important element for determining the comfort and beauty of an architectural space. The basis for this analysis was the color theory of Goethe, quoted often in the text. According to the unknown author, color could correct flaws and mistakes in the space of a room. Calling color a "panacea," the author wrote that "[y]ou can make small spaces large and large spaces small."⁵⁵ In addition, he or she advised using color to unite the furniture in the space

⁵⁴ "Farbe Im Raum: Altmeister Goethes Untersuchungen," undated manuscript, Alfred Arndt Mappe 2, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

⁵⁵ "Sie kann kleine Räume groß und große Räume klein machen." Ibid.

and to create moods. For example, yellow could be a bright and merry color—warm and lively—while vermilion could be shocking—even violent. The essay contrasted the lightness of yellow to the darkness of blue, stating that blue created rooms that felt large but also cold. Envisioning green as a balance of yellow and blue, it praised the color for its ability to create a tranquil mood by not altering the space of a room.⁵⁶

This essay's presence in Arndt's file, along with the contemporary notebook, probably reflects some of Arndt's own color theory or part of his education in color circa 1924. Clearly Arndt understood the power of color to shift and change a space, which this essay advocated. If the conclusions drawn by Goethe and this unknown author are compared to the Haus Auerbach some interesting correspondences emerge. The turquoise of the music room—a mixture of blue and green—has the space enhancing qualities of blue but also the more restrained qualities of green. The yellow band—light and merry in contrast to turquoise—reflects the light of the windows on the opposite walls. In other colored areas in the house, which were not discussed above, the dark blue walls and ceilings in the low hallways on the second floor could appear sky-like and higher because of the color. Even the rich, dark red used on the stair treads and handrails could relate to this essay's discussion of vermilion's energetic and active properties, bringing attention to the central artery of the home. Müller also made connections to specific color theories in his discussion of Arndt, especially to Kandinsky's discussion of blue and yellow in his famous *On the Spiritual in Art*. But this relationship may be too simplistic; it is clear from the wall painting and the colors used that Arndt was not simply recreating some previously learned relationships of color and space, or following a formula. The colors are too unique, subtly mixed, and applied with many different approaches throughout the building for Arndt not to be

⁵⁶ Ibid.

experimenting with his own predilections and artistic sensibility. In Haus Auerbach, Arndt's first independent commission, he was developing his own wall painting vocabulary not just reusing Kandinsky's or Goethe's.

The 1924 notebook also reveals Arndt's very precise study of the chemical and technical issues of paint, the exact recipes for creating colors, and the many different varieties of the same tone, for example Naples Yellow, Indian Yellow, Ocher, Chrome Yellow, Zinc Yellow, and Straw Yellow. Like Scheper, Arndt was very concerned with the different properties of colors and their technical makeup. He alluded to these ideas when he discussed the properties of the oil paint and its steadfastness in his Roda children's home. In addition to his own notes, which were perhaps the result of his lessons with Master of Craft Beberniss, Arndt was familiar with the larger community of wall painters in Germany of the 1920s. He seems to have subscribed to the trade journal *Technische Mitteilungen für Malerei: Zeitschrift der Deutschen Gesellschaft für rationelle Malverfahren* (Technical Bulletins for Painting: Journal of the German Society for Rational Painting Methods) a publication of the Adolf Wilhelm Keim Society in Munich.⁵⁷ The articles in this journal cover topics such as painting techniques, the history of wall painting, and other issues of wall painting in architecture. At the time of the Haus Auerbach, as a recent graduate from the Bauhaus, Arndt was immersing himself in the world of the professional wall painter, recording carefully his formulas and techniques, and becoming familiar with the field. With his projects from 1924–25, he was establishing his own body of work.

Haus Auerbach then was Arndt's coming-out project. He seems to have been given significant free reign by Gropius to create a wall painting scheme for a new building in the architect's still-evolving modernist idiom. Arndt used this freedom to reconfigure the

⁵⁷ Arndt's file in the Bauhaus Archiv contains in an assortment of issues of the journal beginning in October 1924 and ending in March 1931. Alfred Arndt, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

architectural space, enhancing and defying the flat wall surfaces and using paint and color to create new divisions in interior spaces. The space within spaces or the cube-in-a-cube visual effect of the music room or the niche of the dining room, activates and dynamizes the architecture. A second floor bedroom includes one of the most pronounced examples of this effect (figure 3.18). The door to the room is located in the corner, and a bright sherbet orange on a portion of the entrance walls and ceiling creates an imagined box around the doorway, an aura of orange. The other walls are painted light grey, and the ceiling white, but over the windows on the walls opposite the door a frieze of the same bright orange expands the box outwards. In this bedroom, a simple space with few architectural features, Arndt created dynamic spaces. Throughout this virtuoso project, Arndt used color as an active, constructive element of the building with a power to emphasize building parts, but also to create its own effects, sometimes defying, and sometimes complicating the architectural framework.

Hinnerk Scheper

Two years after the completion of the Haus Auerbach, the Bauhaus moved into its new building in the small industrial city of Dessau in Saxony-Anhalt. The building officially opened on December 4, 1926, which was coincidentally the birthday of Wassily Kandinsky. Hinnerk Scheper, the newly appointed leader of the wall painting workshop, oversaw the coloring of the building and designed a number of the spaces himself, thus the resulting wall painting scheme was in essence Scheper's.⁵⁸ Kandinsky's influence in the wall painting workshop was fading, as was Arndt's; Kandinsky withdrew from workshop activity at the Bauhaus and focused on his courses on color, form, and drawing and Arndt now worked primarily in the town of Probstzella in Germany. As compared to the earlier Haus Auerbach, the Dessau Bauhaus building, another

⁵⁸ The exception is the foyer, which was designed by László Moholy-Nagy.

Gropius design, was painted in a more subtle way and perhaps, as many scholars have noted, with a more functional and utilitarian approach.⁵⁹

Born in 1897 in Wulften, Germany, Scheper was trained as a painter before World War I began.⁶⁰ He served for six months in the conflict, after which he attended the Düsseldorf School of Arts and Crafts and the Bremen School of Arts and Crafts before enrolling at the Bauhaus for the school's first semester in winter 1919–1920. He entered directly into what was then called the decorative painting workshop. Beginning in summer 1920, he quickly became involved in its leadership and management, and by summer 1922 he had been placed in charge of the paint supply.⁶¹ Gropius mentioned him as part of an influential group of students, who, although young, had significant promise.⁶² In addition to his training in wall painting, he was also enrolled in Itten's preliminary course and Georg Muche's form instruction as well as other courses at the school.⁶³ Unlike Arndt, who entered the wall painting workshop just at Kandinsky's arrival, Scheper never studied under the Russian teacher. Instead he trained with an eclectic mix of masters of the first few years—Itten, Oskar Schlemmer, and Carl Schlemmer. All three were students of Stuttgart art professor Adolf Hölzel—a practitioner and theorist of wall painting (discussed in chapter one). Scheper's student works for the most part have not survived, except for some easel paintings primarily landscapes inspired by Lyonel Feininger. His wall painting schemes provide the best evidence of his maturing and developing early artistic development.

⁵⁹ Herzogenrath, "Wandgestaltung"; Scheper, *Colourful!*.

⁶⁰ Scheper's biography and a listing of his known works have been thoroughly compiled by Renate Scheper in her most recent text, *Hinnerk Scheper*.

⁶¹ Walter Gropius to Carl Schlemmer, April 29, 1921, Nr.114 Bl.177, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 20, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-800ae3cf-ab8c-4b6a-9b6a-af300038d2a20.

⁶² Walter Gropius to Franz Heidelmann, May 6, 1920, Nr.75 Bl.49, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed July 24, 2014, urn:nbn:de:urmel-b0358aa5-0642-40f6-A626 db5f28bbcc267.

⁶³ It is impossible to know his exact lessons. Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 8.

Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, his wife, is the primary source of information about these early years.⁶⁴ In a 1964 essay Scheper-Berkenkamp described the early days of the workshop. As in the rest of the Bauhaus, play was an important teaching tool and the painting of the canteen in spring 1920 (as discussed in chapter one) was a wild good time. It “became the playground of lively ornament of the tiniest size and gayest colors. We painted and squirted together...with delight and a guilty conscience because we were fully aware that our creations were completely nonfunctional—inappropriate to a room used for eating and relaxing.”⁶⁵ The colorful and jarring wall and ceiling painting of their student days was to Scheper-Berkenkamp, looking back almost forty years later, quite silly. The paintings were the antithesis of her and her husband’s future way of working, which was to use “color in architecture as an integral element of the building, not as an added final touch.”⁶⁶ In his student days, Scheper was critical of the expressionist, eclectic wall painting of the early workshop with his criticism of Karl Peter Röhl’s wall paintings in Gropius’s apartment in 1922.⁶⁷

In contrast to these exuberant student wall painting experiments, Scheper was working on projects such as the Haus Sommerfeld in 1921-22. According to Scheper-Berkenkamp, “in the interior rooms [of Haus Sommerfeld] the structure of the architecture was transformed into

⁶⁴ Aside from this 1964 essay written by Scheper-Berkenkamp, it seems that she authored, edited or co-wrote Scheper’s few written statements. Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp, “Retrospective,” in *Bauhaus and Bauhaus People*, ed. Eckhard Neumann, trans. Eva Richter and Alba Lorman (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* She further explained that at the time the students were reined in by Itten but his cheerless colors were symptomatic of his Mazdaznan beliefs, which did not seem to have attracted either of the Schepers.

⁶⁷ “Zu Schepers Aussagen von 9.10.22 Protokoll der Besprechung der Untersuchungskommission,” October 11, 1922, Nr.12 Bl.208, Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar Papers, Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, accessed September 21, 2013, urn:nbn:de:urmel-28cba5de-3067-4ac6-a04d-633c676c5b503.

harmoniously colorful area partitions.”⁶⁸ Scheper was beginning to develop a wall painting approach that used harmonious and pleasant colors to subtly paint the architecture in this and other wall painting commissions from 1920 to 1922, including Haus Mendel and Haus Stoeckle. As a star of the wall painting workshop, he completed his course of study quickly, passing his journeymen’s test after just two years at the Bauhaus, on May 10, 1922. Gropius wrote a warm letter of recommendation: “[Scheper] has great reliability and prudence and has excelled through his artistic ability, so he formed an important pillar of workshop.... We can recommend Mr. Scheper most warmly as extremely reliable, artistically and technically very capable master. He is capable from his own ability to color artistically valuable buildings in the right spirit.”⁶⁹

In each of his early projects Scheper was above all governed by practicality and a focus on the specifics of the commission. These projects provided valuable opportunities for hands-on training as he was developing his own mature philosophy of wall painting, which was not fully formulated and expressed until 1930 with the publication of the Schepers’ essay “Architecture and Color.” In these early years, Scheper was still using a method of trial and error and experimentation for his wall painting schemes. His first formative individual project after leaving the Bauhaus was the interior wall painting of the State Museum in Weimar.⁷⁰ Scheper wanted the wall colors to coordinate with the paintings in the gallery and to create an overall color harmony in the Neo-Renaissance building. Scheper assigned appropriate background colors to the wall behind each painting and colored the distinct elements of the architecture. In a 1922 letter from

⁶⁸ Scheper-Berkenkamp, “Retrospective,” 116.

⁶⁹ “Er hat sich bei vielen schwierigen Arbeiten der Praxis (Bauten in Berlin und in der Provinz) durch seine große Zuverlässigkeit, Umsicht und besonders auch durch seine künstlerischer Befähigung hervorgetan, sodas er eine wichtige Stütze der Werkstatt bildete... Wir können Herrn Scheper als ausserordentlich zuverlässig, künstlerisch und technisch besonders befähigten Meister auf das wärmste empfehlen. Er ist in der Lage aus eigenem Können heraus künstlerisch wertvolle Bauten in dem richtigen Geist auszumalen.” Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 14.

⁷⁰ Throughout his career Scheper painted many museum spaces. Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*.

to his wife, he made a small sketch for one of the gallery rooms, which gives the title and location of painting and indicates the different colors that would be applied to the walls behind them (figure 3.19). As can be seen in a period photograph of a gallery, Scheper painted a colored rectangle on the wall specifically coordinated to each easel painting, as Scheper-Berkenkamp described it was “especially suited to them in texture and material (figure 3.20).”⁷¹ In addition, Scheper painted the architectural features; for example the cove moldings were light blue and burnt umber.

Scheper did not want to just paint the walls a simple off-white, he wanted to transform and enhance the space, to improve the gallery installation with color. He believed, as did Arndt, that the colors could unify and transform the building into a new whole, something better than the individual parts. According to Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp the result of Scheper’s wall painting was that “the function of the room became more precise and at the same time more effective.”⁷² Additionally the materials and techniques were extremely important for Scheper. In the State Museum, the walls were “highly polished or matte, roughened or textured. By superimposing glazes of different shades the effect of diffused color was achieved.”⁷³ Like Arndt, Scheper was attuned to the techniques and materials of wall painting. Color could transform and enhance architecture, yet the effect was enhanced by the materiality of the paint itself. With the rectangles behind the paintings, he defied the continuity of the wall surface in order to improve the overall effect. In this early project, in contrast to what he advocated and achieved in his later works and writings, Scheper, in essence, undermined the Neo-Renaissance architecture, distracting from the architectonic structure with color.

⁷¹ Scheper-Berkenkamp, “Retrospective,” 116.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

Two other projects from 1924–1925, the University Hospital in Münster and Onkel-Toms-Hütte restaurant in Berlin, provided Scheper with valuable practice as preparation for the painting of the Dessau school buildings in 1926. In these projects he gained experience planning and painting a very large building complex as well as developing management skills for working with a team of students, while also using colors that coordinated with and enhanced the architecture and use of the building. He used color in experimental and active ways, not yet restrained by the structure of architecture. In summer 1924, working as a freelance wall painter, Scheper was commissioned to paint the University Hospital. Scheper quickly finished painting the 6,000 square meters new hospital building complex in less than a year.⁷⁴ Scheper carefully selected colors for their potential psychological effects upon the patients and doctors as well as their fit with the medical uses of the spaces. Renate Scheper discussed how the ceilings and walls of the X-ray rooms and darkrooms of the eye care ward were painted with dark Pompeii red to help the patients' eyes adjust better to light.⁷⁵ Bruno Taut was also using color for psychological effects, for enhancement of architectural forms and pragmatically in the urban settings of his housing projects in the early to mid 1920s.⁷⁶

Surviving, large floor plans for the first and second floor of the building complex illustrate the different colors of the individual spaces. They also reveal how Scheper designed each floor as a cohesive space and how he began to use color to orient visitors and patients (figures 3.21–3.22). As Scheper-Berkenkamp wrote, “The ceilings in the corridors of the individual wards were characterized by stronger colors. Unlettered signs in the same shades as

⁷⁴ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 22.

⁷⁵ The operating rooms were painted in light colors, which were not as distracting to the doctors as pure white. In the patients' rooms, where they would be lying in bed looking up, the ceilings were painted with colors that would induce a calming effect. *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Rosemarie Haag Bletter, “Expressionism and the New Objectivity,” *Art Journal* 46. no. 2 (July 1983): 117.

the ceilings led to the wards.”⁷⁷ On the second floor, for example, red hallways were meant to aid in navigation through the large building. The use of color to aid in orientation will be used again in Dessau and became a key to Scheper’s wall painting philosophy.

An additional factor for Scheper at the University Hospital was the light. As Scheper-Berkenkamp mentioned, “light and shade were carefully considered.”⁷⁸ In general the first floor was painted in mainly pastel colors. These colors could have been used because the lower floor received less light. The second floor was painted in richer, darker colors such as bright red. This consideration of the light conditions and the ability of color to reflect or absorb natural light was also a consideration of Arndt in these same years. In his description of the Roda Children’s Home, Arndt mentioned light and windows as a primary factor for the arrangement of colors.

Fundamental similarities in the approaches of these two young wall painters are evident in Arndt’s Roda Children’s Home and in Scheper’s University Hospital. Both had an interest in the ability of color to alter the moods and psychological state of the users, and both wanted to link the colors to the architectural context and features such as moldings, windows, and light. These public institutional buildings were used by the sick or needy. Arndt and Scheper hoped their wall colors would help to increase the effectiveness of the spaces and could do something to make these people’s lives better, to heal them. In order to enact these color effects though, they approached the surfaces of the walls and ceilings differently. Arndt often defied the structure, breaking the surface of the walls with many colored areas, forming spaces with color, while Scheper remained bound to the architectural structure, coloring whole elements. Unfortunately, these two early examples in Arndt’s and Scheper’s careers cannot be more thoroughly compared

⁷⁷ Scheper-Berkenkamp, “Retrospective,” 116.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

because neither are well documented and have not been, and probably never will be, restored.⁷⁹ These projects demonstrate a fundamental similarity between these two wall painters, a utopian belief formed at the Bauhaus that color could transform architecture and improve lives.

The painting of Onkel-Toms-Hütte restaurant in Berlin is important to mention before moving onto the Dessau building, as an early Dessau wall painting workshop it was one of the first supervised by Scheper. When the Bauhaus moved to Dessau in 1925, Gropius asked Scheper to re-join the school as a “Young Master.” Like Scheper, the “Young Masters” were former Bauhaus students, who became leaders in their former workshops. The others were Marcel Breuer, who became the leader of the furniture department (the workshops were renamed departments in Dessau), Herbert Bayer in printing, Joost Schmidt in sculpture, and Gunta Stölzl in textiles. When the masters and students arrived in Dessau in spring 1925, the new school building was only in the early planning stages and would not be finished until the end of 1926. For a year and half, the school operated out of temporary facilities in an old department store. Scheper, as the new, singular leader of the wall painting workshop, took on the roles of both Kandinsky and Bebernis, the former Master of Form and Master of Craft, respectively.⁸⁰ Scheper was a Bauhaus creation—he embodied the fusion of the technical (craft) and the artistic (form), and he was prepared to teach both aspects of wall painting. In Dessau, the wall painting workshop became more focused on the interaction with the burgeoning architecture department and the production of industrial prototypes. Even though the Bauhaus was now in a more supportive environment and city funded, it was still strapped for cash.

⁷⁹ The location and current state of these buildings has not been exactly identified in the existing literature.

⁸⁰ Kandinsky reduced his role at the school to his form and color classes, and eventually free painting instruction. Heinrich Bebernis did not move with the school to Dessau.

With Scheper's leadership, the workshop completed more outside commissions. Unlike Kandinsky, who was more of a theoretician than an actual wall painter, and who was not often involved in the actual painting process, Scheper possessed more than two years' experience as an independent contractor. The commission for the painting of Onkel-Toms-Hütte restaurant in Berlin was one such paid commission.⁸¹ Onkel Tom's Siedlung (Uncle Tom's Cabin Housing Development), named after Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 famous anti-slavery novel, was a large housing project developed in the 1920s in the Berlin-Zehlendorf neighborhood of the Grunewald forest. Taut played the largest role in the design of this workers housing complex and he incorporated significant color into the exteriors of both the large apartment blocks as well as the smaller individual units. In 1925, Scheper was hired by Hungarian architect Fred Forbat to help with the renovation of a nearby restaurant, which was housed in a nineteenth-century building. Forbat, a former member of the Bauhaus architectural office, who had worked on the Haus Sommerfeld and the Haus Otte (discussed in chapter two) among others, was now head of the industrialist and developer Adolf Sommerfeld's building department.⁸² In his memoir, Forbat recalled that "the whole of the formerly so gloomy building was painted in bright colours by the wall painting workshop, under Scheper's supervision."⁸³ The wall color scheme can be understood today only by studying the surviving plans and extant photographs.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Little is known of this project though Renate Scheper discussed it briefly. She owns two of the plans for the space, one of which is on loan to the Bauhaus Archiv. Scheper, *Colourful!*, 112.

⁸² Krisztina Passuth, "Hungarians at the Bauhaus," review of *From Art to Life: Hungarians at the Bauhaus*, exhibition held at the Janos Pannonius Museum, Pécs and Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin, *Hungarian Quarterly* 51, no. 200 (December 1, 2010): 110–11.

⁸³ Fred Forbat, "Memoirs of an Architect from Four Countries," undated manuscript, quoted in Scheper, *Colourful!*, 112.

⁸⁴ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 33. The building was demolished in 1979 and the wall colors could not be verified. The two floor plans by Scheper provide the exact same view of the space but they are two very different color schemes. One of these is in the Bauhaus Archiv, the other is in

The two surviving perspective drawings show two divergent color schemes, one based primarily on pinks and the other on blues (figures 3.23–3.24). In both, different shades are used on almost every wall or ceiling surface, creating a vibrant and pulsating space. In the pink plan, the support pillars, or posts, which surround a raised dance area, were emphasized with white, black, and gray. Most likely, the “pink” plan was implemented in the newly refurbished restaurant, since it seems to be depicted in a surviving photograph documenting the painting process.⁸⁵ In this photograph, Scheper and his Bauhaus workshop students pose in the unfinished space around the tools of their craft—scaffolding, buckets, and other supplies (figure 3.25). Scheper himself is standing above the rest, near a post that is being painted with a strip of black running down two edges of the pillars, with white in-between.

Overall, compared with the “pink” plan, the “blue” plan uses lighter shades and more white, and includes fewer changes of colors and colored surfaces. However, the “blue” plan has more in common with the later Dessau Bauhaus project, with its subtle colors and large expanses of white, than the more colorful “pink” plan. The implemented “pink” plan however, hints at a more colorful, active, and even aggressive strand of Bauhaus wall painting under Scheper early on, contrary to the usual rhetoric around his work. The lingering influence of Kandinsky in the workshop or the requests of the Hungarian Forbat, who embraced the colors, may also explain the more bold approach for the restaurant.

Renate Scheper’s private collection. Also in the Bauhaus Archiv, there is a photograph that shows Scheper and the wall painting team posing in the midst of painting the restaurant.

⁸⁵ The “pink” drawing is more finished. The survival of two plans suggests that perhaps Scheper/the wall painting workshop developed two different plans for Forbat to choose from. Or these were two different student works, student experiments with the space.

The effect of the many Hungarians in the wall painting workshop has not yet been adequately explored.⁸⁶ The 1922 KURI manifesto, written Bauhaus student Farkas Molnár, called for: constructive, utilitarian, rational, international ideals. As discussed in chapter 2, Molnár and Peter Keler's 1923 design for passageway included bright primary colors and a bold approach to shaping space with color (figure 2.22).⁸⁷ Keler and other wall painting students including Rudolf Paris and Heinrich Koch had also signed the manifesto. In 1925 all were still involved in the wall painting workshop and perhaps worked on the restaurant (figure 2.23). Perhaps the restaurant wall color scheme should be understood as a collaboration of architect and students and not as Scheper's design.

As the painting of the Dessau Bauhaus approached, Scheper was learning how to lead the wall painting workshop. His first semester in Dessau began on May 13, 1925. Although by all accounts Scheper was very calm and kind, he seems to have had difficulty with teaching in the first few months. In July, a conflict erupted between Scheper and KURI member Paris—a longtime wall painting journeyman—over the supervision of wall painting for an outside commission. Ise Gropius, Gropius's wife, recorded this controversy in her diary. She felt Paris was against the practical work of commissions: "He seems to be very influenced by Kandinsky who likes to emphasize theoretical studies in contrast to practical work."⁸⁸ Kandinsky's teachings provided the foundation for wall painting theory and ideas for students like Paris and

⁸⁶ The Hungarian constructivist and KURI member's color theory and use needs to be explored more with future research. For a more general discussion of the Hungarians at the Bauhaus see: Bajkay, "Hungarians at the Bauhaus"; Bajkay, *Von Kunst Zu Leben*; Passuth, "Hungarians at the Bauhaus."

⁸⁷ Farkas Molnár, "KURI Manifesto" (1922), in *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-Gardes, 1910–1930*, ed. Timothy O Benson, trans. John Bártki (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2002), 455–57.

⁸⁸ Ise Gropius, Diary, July 11, 1925, Walter and Ise Gropius Papers, 1883–1981, microfilm, roll 2393, frame 54, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Arndt; however, his student's resulting wall painting philosophy did not pair well with Scheper's more practical bent. Scheper was a recipient of the earlier Stuttgarter influences of Itten and the Schlemmer brothers, and was more willing to change his wall painting colors and style for the architectural setting.

By August, and into the fall of 1925, Scheper had made better adjustments to teaching. He established his authority in the workshop and in the supremacy of his wall painting theories. Ise Gropius reported that through these experiences Scheper had found, as Walter Gropius also had, that “‘contact’ alone does not necessarily produce workshop discipline because there is always a certain number of ‘unteachables’ who have to be forced into order and productivity.”⁸⁹ In other words, some students needed more motivation, guidance, and interaction with the teachers. It certainly took some time before Scheper was able to lead the workshop as he wanted, and to produce wall paintings that satisfied him. A year later, in 1926, Scheper wrote to his wife that he was reorganizing the workshop so that students assumed more responsibility and worked in groups with a leader and material manager. The students would learn to work together as a team in order to take the pressure off Scheper himself.⁹⁰ The experience of the early workshop projects and his private work prepared Scheper and the students of the wall painting workshop for their most important and largest commission, the painting of their new school in Dessau.

The Coloration of the Bauhaus Building in Dessau

In contrast to the Haus Auerbach, which was forgotten for decades and has received scant recognition in the literature, the Bauhaus building in Dessau, built by Walter Gropius in 1926, is the well-known icon of Bauhaus architecture and Gropius's most famous building (figure 3.26).

⁸⁹ Ise Gropius, *Diary*, August 3, 1925, microfilm, roll 2393, frame 59, Walter and Ise Gropius Papers, 1883–1981, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

⁹⁰ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 33.

In the Museum of Modern Art's catalogue for the 2009 exhibition *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*, the scholar Marco de Michelis wrote that in the building “Scheper assigned color the dual task of both characterizing space and orienting its inhabitants. He paid clear attention to perceptual issues, and thus to the power of color in visual experience.”⁹¹ De Michelis's essay rebuked the common belief in a *white* Bauhaus and discussed, briefly, the coloration of the building and Scheper's color plans. In her essay of the same year on the Dessau building's color in *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model*, Monika Markgraf also echoed this concept: “...the color scheme is assigned the task of endowing the architecture with a more powerful expressiveness, and is functional in the sense that it is conceptualized and deployed as an element of the complex as a whole.”⁹² Both de Michelis and Markgraf described Scheper's plans, but also analyzed the realized and reconstructed colorations of the building, and the way that Scheper used color to improve function and orient the visitor.

This relatively new acceptance of the use of color in the iconic building is due, for the most part, to the extensive restoration of the Dessau building, which took place from 1996 to 2006. Through the renovations, many of the colors suggested in Scheper's drawings and plans were decisively confirmed, finally putting to rest the long-standing idea that the colors in Scheper's skillfully rendered color plans were never implemented. The restoration is precisely documented in Markgraf's 2006 book *Archaeology of Modernism: Renovation Bauhaus Dessau*, and the newly recolored and restored building has since spawned texts such as *Bauhaus Dessau: Architecture, Design, Concept*, which acts as a tour through the renovated building.⁹³

⁹¹ Marco de Michelis, “Color Plans for Architecture. 1925–26,” in *Bauhaus, 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 186.

⁹² Markgraf, “Function and Color in the Bauhaus Building in Dessau,” 197.

⁹³ Kirsten Baumann, *Bauhaus Dessau: Architecture, Design, Concept* (Berlin: Jovis, 2007).

In the late 1990s, physical evidence of the original colors had begun to emerge; these are discussed in *Dessau Bauhaus Building, 1926–1999*. This book was published shortly after many Bauhaus sites were declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1996, and during the extensive and careful restoration of the building. In this text, Lutz Schöbe’s essay “Black and White or Colour? Spatial Design in the Bauhaus Building” closely examined some of the interior spaces of Gropius’s building, the building’s effect as a light-filled cube, and Scheper’s color plans. Schöbe was able to identify a few places, such as Gropius’s office, where the findings of the restoration confirm Scheper’s plans.⁹⁴

Classic descriptions of Gropius’s Bauhaus building do not discuss color, but mostly emphasize the glass curtain wall of the workshop wing. Sigfried Giedion described the building using terms like, “crystalline translucence,” “dematerialization,” and “transparency,” without mentioning the colors of the building, and famously compared the building to a Picasso cubist painting.⁹⁵ This reading was memorably critiqued by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky in their essay “Transparency,” which distinguished between the literal transparency of Gropius’s Bauhaus and the phenomenal transparency of Le Corbusier’s Villa Garches.⁹⁶ These descriptions of the Bauhaus school building focused so heavily on the glass that they forgot about or were

⁹⁴There had been suggestions of significant coloration in the buildings earlier, for example in Dennis Sharp’s *Bauhaus, Dessau: Walter Gropius*, which he mentioned Scheper’s proposed (i.e. not implemented) color plans and quoted a contemporary account that referred to some color in the spaces. But Sharp was not able to confirm these suggestions. Dennis Sharp, *Bauhaus, Dessau: Walter Gropius* (London: Phaidon Press, 1993). The coloration was also hinted at in Nerdinger, *The Walter Gropius Archive*; and also discussed in Michael Siebenbrodt and Christine Kutschke, “Farbe in Der Festebene,” *Form und Zweck* 8, no. 6 (1976): 15–21.

⁹⁵Sigfried Giedion, *Walter Gropius* (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), 54–55.

⁹⁶Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, “Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal,” *Perspecta* 8 (January 1, 1963): 45–54. I question if this reading holds if one considers the paint effects and colors of the building. Seeing through the building was certainly important at the Bauhaus but what one sees when looking through it is color—color that projects back out towards us—providing the alternative reading to Slutzky and Rowe.

ignorant of the color, despite the fact that Gropius referred to it in the 1938 catalogue for the seminal Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Bauhaus 1919–1928*: “The interior decoration of the entire building was executed by the wall-painting workshop.”⁹⁷ This exact sentence was originally published in Gropius’s earlier book *Bauhausbauten Dessau*.⁹⁸ The 1930 text also included photographs of some of the interior spaces, and captions that identified the designers of the *farbig gestaltung* (color design)—usually Scheper. Despite Gropius’s own acknowledgement of color in the spaces, the black-and-white photographs mask the colors’ existence, and few contemporary written descriptions exist; therefore, the wall color schemes were for the most part forgotten. With the recent recognition of the coloration of the Dessau building, along with increased consideration of the primary designer—Scheper—the foundations have been set for a more nuanced dissection of the colors of the Dessau Bauhaus in both plan and execution.

Like the Haus Auerbach, the restoration of the colors of the Dessau Bauhaus building, completed in 2006 should not be regarded as the original wall painting, but only a close approximation. The restoration, despite its limitations, does allow one to experience the wall colors and architecture together for the first time since the original painting was completed in 1926. Moving through the building and understanding how the colors work in the space is at the heart of this analysis. In addition, the drawings and plans, contemporary photographs (most of which are black and white), and the few contemporary accounts of the building augment a discussion of the Dessau school’s color scheme and help to create a better sense of the original colors. At times Scheper’s color drawings, today located in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin, reflect

⁹⁷ Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919–1928* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938), 101.

⁹⁸ “die farbig raumgestaltung des gesamten baues wurde von der wandmalereiabteilung des bauhauses durchgeführt.” Walter Gropius, *Bauhausbauten Dessau* (Munich: A. Langen, 1930), 15.

an unrealized vision for the building and perhaps Scheper's ideal coloration scheme. These include an orientation plan, a perspective of the exterior, two sets of elevations, three large floor plans, and a more detailed plan for Gropius's new office. In order to understand Scheper's wall painting philosophy and the process of implementation, I plan to discuss not only the realized and restored coloration of the building, but also Scheper's plans.

Scheper has often been given exclusive credit for the design of the Bauhaus building's color scheme. However, many members of the wall painting workshop were important contributing designers. As Renate Scheper described, student Werner Isaacsohn was conceivably the primary designer for the administrative offices and the entry to the studio building, and student Heinrich Koch may have developed the design of the canteen and auditorium.⁹⁹ In the months leading up to the painting of the school, Ise Gropius wrote in her diary regarding Scheper's control of the workshop and the lack of credit given he gave to the journeymen:

It also seems to be a fact that Scheper dominates the wall-painting workshop too much so that the others feel slighted. Every job goes under his name, while it would be necessary that also the others, like Arndt and Koch, should get in line to head some work independently.¹⁰⁰

Scheper was totally in command of the wall painting workshop, but perhaps in a rather autocratic manner.¹⁰¹ It is impossible at this point, using only the scant available documents and primary sources, to identify exactly who painted what. It was certainly Scheper who drew a number of the large colored architectural plans, floor plans, and elevations as well as the famous orientation

⁹⁹ Koch's extant plans of the cantine and auditorium were published for the first time in Scheper, *Colourful!*, 157.

¹⁰⁰ Ise Gropius, Diary, April 19, 1926, microfilm, roll 2393, frame 132, Walter and Ise Gropius Papers, 1883–1981, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

¹⁰¹ Arndt is mentioned, therefore, he was still at the Bauhaus before moving more permanently to Probstzella, and perhaps the lack of freedom and acknowledgement may have contributed to his departure. Not much is known about the other wall painting member mentioned, Heinrich Koch; is probably best known for marrying one of the most gifted Bauhaus weavers Benita Otte.

plan. Although Scheper may have monopolized the credit for the wall paintings, he did supervise the project; therefore, for clarity and ease they are discussed here as Scheper's.

The exception is the design of the main vestibule of the building. This space was not under the wall painting workshop's sphere of influence but was designed by Moholy-Nagy, much to the chagrin of Scheper. Ise Gropius also mentioned this in her diary:

Squabbles between Scheper and Moholy. Moholy is angry with him because Scheper is in opposition to the intention of Moholy to take over the design of the vestibule. Since everybody was given the option to pick a particular object to work on, this attitude of Scheper's is unfounded and petty.¹⁰²

This space was very clearly out of Scheper's control. The foyer is quite different from the other rooms of the building designed by the wall painting workshop. It was in many ways an expansion of Moholy-Nagy's oil painting compositions to the walls with planes of blue, pink, gray, black, and white, reflective mirrors, and chrome elements.¹⁰³

In the restoration, the exterior of the building was found to be primarily white and gray (figure 3.26–3.27). Although this lack of coloration is one primary example of the non-implementation of Scheper's planned color scheme, in looking at his unrealized plans one begins to get a better sense of Scheper's wall painting philosophy and his approach to applying color to architecture. Scheper wanted color to be a vital, active element in the building. Like Arndt, he understood the power of color and wanted to use color to enhance the architecture inside and out. Scheper's plans for the exterior—a large perspective drawing from the southeast and four elevations—feature small bursts of red and yellow in many locations, but principally use grays and off-whites as main the color elements (figures 3.28–2.30). The red metal window dividers

¹⁰²I. Gropius, Diary, April 19, 1926.

¹⁰³ This Moholy-Nagy space is important as the entry vestibule for the Bauhaus building and has yet to be explored in depth, however it is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

and supports, which appear in both elevation drawings for the workshop wing are some of the most noticeable features of the subtle coloration of the building. The bright color highlights the large glass curtain wall and this red then also coordinates with the red of the doors all around the building.

The use of color as an accent to glass in the innovative modern building is reminiscent of Owen Jones' color design for Joseph Paxton's 1851 Crystal Palace in London.¹⁰⁴ Jones advocated a bold primary color plan for the interior of the Crystal Palace, giving lectures on the topic, developing different color plans, and writing about his theories of polychrome architecture in his 1856 *The Grammar of Ornament*, a German language copy of which was in the Bauhaus library.¹⁰⁵ For Jones, bright primary colors painted on the solid components of the great glass building, like the girders and dividers between the plans of glass, would create an overall harmony in the space and would enhance the effect of the building (figure 3.31). His revolutionary plans, however, were met with great resistance and, like Scheper's, Jones's colorations were not fully implemented. A toned-down blue version of his plan was used. Jones's idea of using color to increase the effect of the technologically innovative architecture is an informative ancestor for Scheper's designs, although it is unknown if Scheper was aware of this earlier polychromy.

¹⁰⁴ I was inspired to notice these similarities and the links between the Crystal Palace and the architecture of the 1920 by Ufuk Ersoy, *Seeing through Glass: The Fictive Role of Glass in Shaping Architecture from Joseph Paxton's "Crystal Palace" to Bruno Taut's "Glashaus"* (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2008), accessed November 15, 2013, <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3328551>.

¹⁰⁵ Stephanie Moser, *Designing Antiquity: Owen Jones, Ancient Egypt and the Crystal Palace*, 2012; Michael Siebenbrodt, *Die Bauhaus-Bibliothek versuch einer Rekonstruktion* (Weimar: Verlag Bauhaus-University, 2009), 155; Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (London: Day and Son, 1856).

Jones argued that the red window lintels and dividers in the Crystal Palace would have made a harmonious composition, and certainly Scheper shared Jones's interest in using color as an enhancement to even the most modern building. Scheper planned the exterior colors to highlight Gropius's structure and make it more comprehensible. The most noticeable example of this is in the elevation drawings of the building from the east, as one approaches from the train station (figure 3.29). This elevation view shows the side of the workshop wing, the bridge, and the municipal school wing of the building. In the upper right, the two rows of windows extending across the bridge abruptly end before the corner of the building, leaving a large area of blank, solid walls. Scheper colored the corner of the flat wall surface (figure 3.32). The orange square stands out strikingly in comparison to the other subtle uses of bright color in the plan. Few scholars, however, seemed to have discussed it. The elevation drawing, which does not have an identification number at the Bauhaus Archiv, was not published until 2005 in *Colourful*. Discussions of the restoration by Markgraf and Schöbe did not mention it. Only Renate Scheper argued that this feature was meant to increase the architectonic effect of the bridge resting on the first floor of the technical school.¹⁰⁶ However, this bold orange square was never implemented. The many black-and-white photographs of the building indicate that this area was actually painted white. As Monika Markgraf has explained, through documentary photographs and restoration-based analyses, the bright colorful elements—the reds, yellows and oranges—were generally not implemented on the façade.¹⁰⁷ Scheper wrote his wife on August 18, 1926, that Gropius had agreed to a more restrained plan.¹⁰⁸ Nonetheless, the orange square's inclusion in the elevation drawing reveals Scheper's more aggressive and active wall painting strategy. With

¹⁰⁶ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 86.

¹⁰⁷ Markgraf, *Archäologie der Moderne*, 151.

¹⁰⁸ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 36.

this orange square, he would have left a bright and noticeable signature on the building, demonstrating the power of color on architectural form, and making a striking color impression for arriving guests. These colors, however, risked distracting from the architecture, and the only confirmed uses of bright colors on the exterior are the red doors and the yellow beams on the underside of the bridge.¹⁰⁹

While Owen Jones's use of color for window and glass dividers resonates with Scheper's design, Bruno Taut's colorful housing projects of the 1920s provide a more contemporaneous comparison for Scheper's exterior coloration plan. In chapter one, I discussed the Bauhaus wall paintings alongside two interiors from Taut's Lindenhof Siedlung, from 1920, but Taut's use of wall painting and color in architecture was much more widespread. Taut had been aggressively using color in his buildings, particularly in his large housing estates, most notably beginning with Falkenberg Garden City in 1913.¹¹⁰ His building complex in the Berlin neighborhood of Britz, known as the Hufeisensiedlung (Horseshoe Housing Estate), which began construction in 1925, is a prominent example.¹¹¹ In this estate, which was co-designed with Martin Wagner, Taut used color to highlight specific features of the building blocks. For example, on the main horseshoe-shaped apartment block, the recessed exterior walls over the doorway and on the attic level are painted bright blue (figure 3.33). The predominantly white exterior is instead colorful due to the blue areas, red brick and brightly colored trim around the doors. Blue also accentuated the walls

¹⁰⁹ Markgraf, *Archäologie der Moderne*, 151.

¹¹⁰ Winfried Brenne, *Bruno Taut: Master of Colourful Architecture in Berlin* (Berlin: Braun, 2013).

¹¹¹ Helge Pitz, "Die Farbigekeit der vier Siedlungen," in *Vier Berliner Siedlungen der Weimarer Republik: Britz, Onkel Toms Hütte, Siemensstadt, Weisse Stadt*, ed. Norbert Huse (Berlin: Argon, 1987), 59–80; Annemarie Jaeggi, "Hufeisensiedlung Britz," in *Vier Berliner Siedlungen der Weimarer Republik: Britz, Onkel Toms Hütte, Siemensstadt, Weisse Stadt*, ed. Norbert Huse (Berlin: Argon, 1987), 111–36.

of the recessed balconies and set back from the exterior façade.¹¹² With his orange square, Scheper undertook the kind of integration of color and architectural form that Taut used masterfully in the Horseshoe Estate and other examples: color as an accent to the subtle architectural features and as a bright and vibrant element in itself. Scheper's use of red for the window dividers and yellow on the undersides of many overhangs, including the balconies of the studio wing, would have brought bright and colorful attention to these features. Although Scheper was not as bold as Taut, he was also not a timid and conservative colorist, but a subtle manipulator of architectural form.

Color is rare in the executed coloration of the Bauhaus building, and gray was used even more than was indicated on the surviving plans. In the plans and in the execution, in the exterior and interior, gray is used actively as a color in many different shades, to define different elements, to distinguish contrasting planes and masses from each other, and to make the architectural elements more noticeable. In the perspective and elevations, the lower level all the ways around the building is a medium gray. The supports to the bridge are also this medium gray and it is used again on the end wall of the workshop wing. The walls of the festive wing, the section of the building between the workshop wing and the studio building, are a darker gray. In the reconstruction, gray was used on all the window surrounds, on many doors, and on other trim areas. On the external walls of the lower level and on the south staircase block, which is the location of the iconic "bauhaus" sign, a gray with shimmering mica particles imbedded into its surface was discovered in the restoration and then recreated.¹¹³ All the gray, particularly on the lower level, makes the building above seem to float, an effect similar to that of the Haus

¹¹² Along with five more of Taut's Berlin housing estates, the Horseshoe Estate was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008. Since the 1980s, it has undergone extensive color restoration programs. Brenne, *Bruno Taut*, 90–97.

¹¹³ Markgraf, *Archäologie der Moderne*, 129–153.

Auerbach. Art historian Wilhelm van Kempen wrote in the 1920s that the “white cube shines out in the evening with light streaming out through all its windows.”¹¹⁴ Nelly Schwalacher in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* also wrote about the “radiating whiteness.”¹¹⁵ The whiteness of the cube was made more noticeable and readable by predominance of gray.

Interior Color

The external color scheme plans were probably finished in September 1926, while the interior plans, specifically Scheper’s orientation plan, were completed a few months earlier. The orientation plan is the most famous color plan for the Dessau school building and has been published and exhibited many times (figure 3.34). It was first published in the July 1926 issue of *Offset* magazine.¹¹⁶ It depicts all levels of the building at once, the floor plans stacked and expanding out from the basement on the bottom to the top floor of the studio wing at the top. Linking the different floors are lines and arrows in the colors of the different workshops, illustrating the movement of the user through the space via the staircases, doorways, and central routes through the building. The spaces of each workshop are outlined with their specific designated color, developed originally by Schlemmer in 1922, for example wall painting is purple.¹¹⁷

The orientation plan is not really a plan for the wall painting scheme of the building but more of a school directory, using color to indicate the location of each the workshops. The plan’s

¹¹⁴ Wilhelm van Kampen, “Die Einweihung des Bauhauses Dessau,” *Dessauer Zeitung*, December 4, 1926, quoted in Walter Scheiffele, “‘You Must Go There’ – Contemporary Reactions,” in *The Dessau Bauhaus Building, 1926–1999*, ed. Margret Kentgens-Craig, trans. Michael Robinson (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1998), 120.

¹¹⁵ Nelly Schwalacher, “Das Neue Bauhaus,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Evening Edition, October 31, 1927, quoted in Droste, *Bauhaus*, 122.

¹¹⁶ Lutz Schöbe, “Black and White or Colour? Spatial Designs in the Bauhaus Building,” in *The Dessau Bauhaus Building, 1926–1999*, ed. Margret Kentgens-Craig (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1998), 45. Schöbe concluded that Scheper designed the building from inside out.

¹¹⁷ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 84.

publication in *Offset* before the school was completed defines it more as an advertisement or preview for the new building. It does not accurately reflect the specific coloring of the spaces and this fact may be one of the reasons it has been often assumed that Scheper's color scheme was never implemented. This plan is not a working drawing and must be considered primarily a work of art separate from the actual coloring of the building.

There are actually two versions of the orientation plan, a large original drawing and a lithograph, the latter of which was used for the *Offset* publication. They are virtually identical, but the drawing, made of tempera and ink on paper, includes an attached statement from Scheper:

Colour orientation plan for the Bauhaus in Dessau shows the order of the building complex as determined by its various functions in terms of color. From the vestibule, arrows and lines in appropriate colour give directions to the workshops and departments. A distinction was made in the design between supporting and filling areas, thus clearly expressing the building's architectural tensions. The spatial effect of the color is enhanced by the use of different materials: smooth, polished, grainy and rough rendered areas, matte dull and gloss paints, glass, metal, etc.¹¹⁸

In this undated statement, Scheper essentially lays out the most important features of the orientation plan, but also the overall approach to coloration of the building.

This statement reveals the same concerns that Hinnerk Scheper and Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp laid out in their 1930 essay "Architecture and Color" for the Soviet journal *Mal'jarnoe*. In it, after the Schepers' discussed the beauty of the "gloriously colored" city of Moscow and the unfortunate new gray buildings that weakened the "red-wealth of the city," they

¹¹⁸ Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Orientation Plan of the Bauhaus Dessau*, tempera and india ink on paper mounted on cardboard, with label, 1926, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin on long-term loan from the Scheper Estate. Translation from: Schöbe, "Black and White or Colour?," 45. When this statement was attached to the plan is unknown. It could have been much later than 1926, perhaps when it was donated to the archive.

described the role of color in architecture.¹¹⁹ According to the Schepers, color should not be based on individual taste but should be aesthetically bonded with the formal and technical conditions of the building, meaning that each wall painting scheme has to be designed for that specific space and architecture. They acknowledged that the wrong colors, the wrong combination of pure colors and neutral tones, could destroy a space. They insisted that color and paint added to the surface of the wall should not be a decorative dressing to the building but a protective skin for a building, serving a very practical purpose. In addition, they felt paint and color could invigorate or oppress, and the Schepers criticized the usual white ceilings and somber dark walls of contemporary rooms, which made the rooms feel smaller. Light-reflecting colors should be used instead, and in combination with the windows and structure of the space. They also explained the use of color to orient, to help the user navigate large building complexes. Overall, this essay, much like Kandinsky's 1924 memo to the Masters Council, is a declaration of color's crucial role in architecture.

The Bauhaus building project for Scheper is a kind of magnum opus, a realization and crystallization of his philosophy of wall painting and a visualization of Scheper's 1930 ideas. The key uses of color in the staircases and corridors, in the festive area, and in parts of the municipal school wing demonstrate Scheper's belief in color as a powerful element of the architecture. Color is used to guide and orient the user to the space, to highlight the architecture and surface textures, and to indicate the use and importance of the building.

Movement through the space was an important consideration in Scheper's wall painting philosophy and I believe that the colors are meant to be experienced as one walks through the Dessau building. First, one enters through the red, main door and into the Bauhaus wing of the

¹¹⁹ "...hier erscheint alles farbenprächtig," "den Rot-Reichtum der Stadt," Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe 1930," 72.

building (figure 3.35). Red is an important color throughout, usually signifying areas of importance. Once inside, the central artery for the building, one is guided up to the higher floors by the subtly colored staircase. The dark grays of the entry level contrast with the bright colors of the first floor landing, designed by Moholy-Nagy. As one continues to climb the main stairs, the most noticeable element on the landing between the first and second floors is the very large glass wall that faces out towards the municipal school wing and the bridge (figure 3.36). Very common to Scheper spaces, first one notices the large windows and the other interesting architectural features, and second one notices the color. Color is used in this small landing to enhance and to help clarify the architectonic space.¹²⁰ The ceiling is pale yellow, a reflective color. The side walls are white and the narrow strip of wall to the left and right of the massive wall of windows is black. Black does not reflect or distract from the light pouring into the space and seems to disappear against the brightness of the windows. In the two upper corners, where the white walls, yellow ceiling, and the black next to the windows converge, the planes of color create a dynamic composition. The colored, intersecting planes of the wall surfaces emphasize the architectural details (figure 3.37).

On the other side of the landing, a combination of grays and black transforms the underside of the stairs to the second floor into a sculptural presence (figure 3.38). If all of these surfaces were white, the intricacies of the stairs would blend together and simplify the forms. The staircase painted in different shades of gray allows the angles and planes to be better perceived by the viewer. In combination with the almost black handrails, banister ledge, and the stair treads, the gray of the underside of the stairs contrasts with the lightness and brightness of

¹²⁰ The coloration is indicated in Scheper's floor plan drawing, but has also been restored in the space.

the windows and yellow ceiling as well as with the second floor above and its large plate glass window.

Stairs are critical throughout the building and in many Bauhaus projects. The staircase is where people navigate the space, move to different sections of the building, and interact with each other, and the architecture and color play a vital role in these movements. In the Dessau building's studio wing, the staircase includes a forceful combination of colors (figure 3.39). Each floor has a designated color, red, blue, and yellow, and the color of the ceilings of the staircase landings foreshadow the floor above. As discussed in previous chapters, the painting of staircases had been common in Weimar from Oskar Schlemmer's figurative wall paintings in the workshop building (figure 1.29) to Herbert Bayer's abstract and primary colored back staircase in the main building (figures 2.16–2.19). In Arndt's Haus Auerbach the staircase is painted a dynamic combination of red, gray, and white. Schlemmer's famous 1932 painting *Bauhaus Stairway* also depicts this important central artery of the building and students of the textile workshop walking up and down (figure 3.40).

Another area of the building, where color acts both as an aid to navigation as well as an accent to the architectural features of the building, is the bridge connecting the second floor of the Bauhaus with the municipal school wing (figure 3.41). Again, one first notices the architecture, the larger wall of windows along one side and the doors to the administrative offices on the other. In the middle of the predominantly white bridge, two bands of bright red frame the narrowing of the row of windows in the middle of the span.¹²¹ Because the red stands out sharply against the white of the space and the black of the windowsill, the viewer notices the subtle change in the window height (figure 3.42). Like the orange square on the exterior, Scheper

¹²¹ The use of these red bands, illustrated in Scheper's floor plan, was verified in the restoration.

filled the vacant wall surfaces after a change in the shape of the windows with bright color. The red also highlights the transition between the wing of the building dedicated to the Bauhaus and the municipal school, a navigational marker. Beyond enhancing the architecture, reinforcing the structure of the building, and aiding navigation, red also works as a sign. Red as mentioned above indicates importance and here it is located right in front of Gropius's office. The association of Gropius with the color red can be traced back to Weimar and the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition, where Herbert Bayer also used red to indicate an association to Gropius in his wall paintings on the back staircase of the Weimar building (figure 2.16). There, Bayer painted a red square on the landing right outside the door to Gropius's office, with an arrow and label pointing the way to it. Scheper echoed this identification of Gropius's office with red, but without the arrows and words; just the color remains.

In the staircases and the second floor bridge, color is used shrewdly—a ceiling here, a section of a wall there. The Schepers wrote in 1930 how in large building complexes “particular localities could be highlighted through a particular color.”¹²² In addition to individual walls, whole floors could have distinct color schemes, and Scheper experimented with this idea earlier at the University Hospital. For the Schepers, however, the individualized details and small uses of color all had to work together as a whole. The color should “*organize* the individual functional parts and make a harmonic impression, which could be repeated in the individual details.”¹²³

¹²² “Die einzelnen Etagen können mit einer bestimmten Farbe markiert, Wege farbige illustriert werden, besondere Örtlichkeiten können durch eine besondere Farbe hervorgehoben werden.” Scheper and Scheper, “Architektur und Farbe,” 74.

¹²³ “Die allgemeine Farbigkeit eines Gebäudes muß auf einem Plan basieren, sie soll eine Reihe von Abstufungen und Kontrasten beinhalten, sie soll die einzelnen funktionalen Teile ‘organisieren’ und einen harmonischen Eindruck machen, der sich in einzelnen Details wiederholen kann.” Ibid.

Since color was used in the bridge to highlight Gropius's office, this accent needed to work within the whole plan.

The overall plan and the complex way that color organizes the Bauhaus building is best grasped in Scheper's three floor plans (figures 3.43–3.45). The plans show not only the Bauhaus workshop and festive areas but also the floors of the municipal school, which are the most coherent and unified color spaces in the whole building. The municipal school was officially titled the *Anhaltische Berufsschule*, an independently administered regional vocational school based in Dessau. The city's funding of the new Bauhaus building was contingent on the creation of sufficient space for this municipal school.¹²⁴ As Karin Wilhelm argued the independence of the two schools was a major element in the overall architectural design of the building complex. In this discrete section of the building, used by a completely separate school, Scheper used more bold and purposeful color and he was able to more completely realize his wall painting goals, outside of the pressures or restraints caused by painting the walls of his own school. The stairways, hallways, and classrooms were all painted with much brighter and more saturated colors than the Bauhaus wing, which, despite small hints of color, was predominantly white. The different spaces within each distinctively colored floor received varied combinations of colors—the hallways, for example, were different from the classrooms. The colors were applied according to the architectural structure, that is, the beams and supports were painted differently than the in-fill walls in between them. Although all three colors—red, blue, and yellow—are used on each floor, one is dominate on each.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Karin Wilhelm, "Seeing—Walking—Thinking: The Bauhaus Building Design," in *The Dessau Bauhaus Building*, 12.

¹²⁵ The first floor is mostly red, and the plan shows red was also used on this level in the festive wing's canteen. Blue dominates the second floor.

In the plan for the third floor, the dominant color is yellow with areas of red and blue (figure 3.45). In the hallway of the restored space, almost exactly following Scheper's third floor plan, the structural beams that span the width of the wing are accented, the undersides painted red (figure 3.46). Once these beams cross over into the classrooms, the undersides however, change to yellow, following the shift of function and space, and this transition is visible through the clerestory windows between classrooms and hallway (figure 3.47). At the end of the hall, a bright blue wall indicates entry to the administrative bridge. The combination of neutral colors—white and gray—with the bright primaries compels the viewer to notice the architectural features—the beams and clerestory windows—as well as to identify the floor. Although Scheper was bolder in the municipal school, he was still subscribing to his own developing philosophy of wall painting and colored architecture. Color becomes subordinate to architecture, but as he stated in 1930, it also “gives it greater expression” and increases its effects and features.¹²⁶

It is unclear why Scheper used a bolder color approach in the non-Bauhaus part of the building. Why waste these colorful effects on the non-Bauhaus students? One hypothesis for this disparity is that Scheper wanted to clearly distinguish the two schools, one colored and one white. Another reason may be that Scheper was not able, or allowed to, use these bright and bold colors in the Bauhaus spaces. Gropius may have vetoed aggressive coloring plans in the Bauhaus section, or maybe the students and masters voiced objections. Gropius's role in the color selection and approval process is not clear. As discussed in the first chapter, color on the walls tended to be controversial at the Bauhaus. Beyond the possible political or diplomatic reasons for the difference in coloring, Scheper might also have been simply responding to the different

¹²⁶ “Die der Architektur unmittelbar untergeordnete Wandmalerei verleiht ihr einen größeren Ausdruck, erhöht sie und hat so die Möglichkeit, sie indirect in Szene zu setzen.” Scheper and Scheper, “Architektur und Farbe,” 73.

architectures of the two wings. The architecture of the municipal school is not as formally or technically innovative. Without the large windows or interesting architectural features of the Bauhaus wing, the darker municipal school may have needed more color to increase its interest.

In addition to using color for orientation and to emphasize the structure and architecture of the building, Scheper also mentions an interest in different surface effects and paint techniques in his note on the orientation plan. The use of varied effects is most clearly demonstrated in the auditorium, in what was known as the “festive wing” of the school, which was the multi-use center of social life at the Bauhaus. The two-parts of the “festive wing” needed two distinct color schemes and since the sidewalls are primarily windows, most of the color is on the ceiling (figure 3.48). The canteen, or cafeteria, area includes accents of red and black, while the auditorium section is darker, black and gray (figure 3.49). In the auditorium, the darker colors worked well for its use as a theater (figure 3.50). On the ceiling, Scheper and his students experimented with surface texture.¹²⁷ The many prominent structural beams running the length of the auditorium space, from the doorway to the stage, are painted white, in contrast to the gray between the beams or what Scheper called the in-fill areas. Scheper addressed this issue in the note on the orientation plan, “A distinction was made in the design between supporting and filling areas, thus clearly expressing the building’s architectural tensions.”¹²⁸ This emphasis continues beyond the confines of the auditorium space as the structural beams of the auditorium

¹²⁷ Although the painting of this space was supervised by Scheper and its coloring was included in his floor plan, Heinrich Koch may have been the primary designer. He created a reflected ceiling plan with elevations of the room, which was published for the first time by Renate Scheper in *Colourful*. There are small differences between the restored colors and Koch’s plans, particularly around the side windows. A photograph from Gropius’s *Bauhaus Bauten Dessau* seems to confirm the restoration. Also, in this text Gropius attributed the color design of the space to the wall painting workshop as a whole, but he also named Scheper as the leader. Again, while Koch perhaps developed the plan, it was Scheper’s final call.

¹²⁸ Schöbe, “Black and White or Colour?,” 45. When this statement was attached to the plan is unknown. It could have been much later than its creation in 1926.

are repeated in the supports of the bridge seen out the windows. The underside of the bridge is accented with color, that is, the in-fill between the supports is yellow. As in the municipal wing, the windows make visible the relationships and continuities of the colors inside and outside.

In addition to highlighting the structure of the auditorium, Scheper experimented with surface texture, as he also discussed in the orientation plan: “The spatial effect of the color is enhanced by the use of different materials: smooth, polished, grainy and rough rendered areas, matt dull and gloss paints, glass, metal, etc.”¹²⁹ A basecoat of gray was sprayed in between the beams, and then an aluminum silver-bronze was painted over it. Using this technique, little pieces of the metal were lodged in the surfaces at various angles, creating an animated and reflective surface effect.¹³⁰ The surface texture stresses the architecture and use of the space, and the light-reflective paint is appropriate for the use of the room as a theater. Scheper’s extensive interest in technique, which he shared with Arndt, would continue to develop in his teaching. In addition, Scheper wanted his paint and color to be active in the space, to be an enhancement and not just a dull background. Despite the shimmering paint, the most noticeable features of the ceiling are the light fixtures designed by Moholy-Nagy and the metal workshop.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ This effect was described to me by Monika Markgraf in June 2013, and she mentioned it in Markgraf, *Archäologie der Moderne*, 89.

¹³¹ The other part of the large festive wing was used as a cafeteria and is separated from the auditorium with a movable, folding wall. This space has a much different structural character, which is emphasized in the brighter color scheme. Two long ceiling beams, much fewer than in the auditorium, run from back to front. These beams are the starting point for the color scheme. They divide the room into three sections, a wide central space and two side spaces. In a plan by Koch, in Scheper’s floor plan, and in the renovation, the ceiling of central space is white, the side of the beams are black and their undersides white, and the ceiling on both sides of the room between the beams and the window walls is bright red. These create, as Markgraf called them, “red areas.” There are also many different surface textures recreated in the renovation; for example the beams are smooth in comparison to the rough central section. Again red has a prominence, but this time not as a symbol of transition or importance but of general excitement, vibrancy, and fun. Ibid., 81–85.

In Scheper's painting of the Dessau building, color is used to enhance, orient, and enrich the architecture. On the exterior, Scheper's colorful perspective and elevation drawings demonstrate an interest in adding color as an active element of the building. In the interior, color emphasized structural architectural elements, movement, and navigation. Scheper's designs, however, were not strictly utilitarian or functional. There also contain elements of play and experimentation. The bold municipal school wing is bright and rather exciting. In some cases, as with red, there is meaning behind the colors. One of the important effects of color, which the Schepers described in their 1930 article is the link between colors and psychology. For many at the Bauhaus from Kandinsky to Itten, Klee to Scheper, colors were associated with feelings, moods, and psychological states. The Schepers wrote, "Important functions in the color design are the physiological and psychological influence of the color on mankind: limewashes may delight, others may oppress."¹³² But for the Dessau school building it not clear exactly how Scheper applied these psychological effects. Color's space creating properties and potential was explained by the Scheper. "By means of color a room may appear bigger or smaller, colors may be refreshing to mankind or invigorating or also in part they may bore or oppress."¹³³ But the exact applications of these theories in the Dessau building are unknown.

Scheper and Arndt both believed that color was powerful and that the various techniques, surface textures, and mediums were important factors in a building. For Scheper, color changed our interaction and our appreciation of the space. For example in a hospital, the soothing colors

¹³² "Wichtige Funktionen bei der Farbgestaltung sind der physiologische und der psychologische Einfluß der Farbe auf den Menschen: Kalkfarben können erfreuen auf den Menschen: Kalkfarben können erfreuen, andere können bedrücken..." Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe," 74.

¹³³ "mittels der Farbe kann man einen Raum größer erscheinen lassen oder kleiner, Farben können auf den Menschen erfrischend wirken oder belebend oder auch im Gegenteil können sie langweilen oder bedrücken." Ibid.

would aid in healing. For Arndt, color could change the user's psychology and moods, benefiting sick children. Both Scheper and Arndt were concerned with function; they wanted their colors to work within the specific architecture and specific context. They believed that their colors would improve the architectural setting, and as Kandinsky had described, they believed that color could enhance and transform the form.

The big difference between the two designers lie in practice, whether they embraced or condemned the ability of color to form its own space. Arndt used a particular color palette of pastels and sherbet tones, while Scheper used colors based in primaries and many shades of gray and black. Arndt embraced the way that paint and color would break open and partition the solid structure of a room, creating spaces within space, bringing architectural features to the fore, but also hiding and disguising others. Arndt did not ignore the architecture, but also did not yield to it, and his more proactive designs transformed the spaces with color. Scheper, however, criticized when paint and color disrupted and transformed a space, writing, "The wall painting may not and must not displace the architectonic form and lose the connection with it."¹³⁴ Painting had to be subordinate to the architecture and Scheper painted in the lines, following what the architecture was already expressing.

Arndt and Scheper had their own discrete philosophies and created distinctive wall painting schemes, but an important connection between them helps to explain the differences between Haus Auerbach and the Bauhaus Dessau building, the architect Walter Gropius. In these two short years between the two buildings there were many changes in the Bauhaus and in Gropius's private architectural practice. Haus Auerbach was an important early modernist-style building, but it was still a small private house, in which the clients had input in the color design.

¹³⁴ "Die Wandmalerei kann und darf die architektonische Form nicht verdrängen und die Verbindung mit ihr verlieren." Ibid., 73.

The Bauhaus, on the other hand, was a large public building, an icon of Gropius's career, which he controlled as both client and architect. In the Haus Auerbach, Arndt was able, and perhaps allowed, to create rather vibrant and dynamic wall paintings, shaping the simple building with color. But at the Dessau Bauhaus, Gropius wanted his own architecture to shine through. Scheper's wall painting scheme could not be too bold or aggressive, and the form of the architecture could not be transformed.

Gropius was rarely explicit about his use of color or white in his architecture of the 1920s. In his 1955 book *Scope of Total Architecture*, he discussed the relativity of colors and their ability to be active or passive and to make the walls recede or advance. "In fact the designer—if he masters these means—can create illusions which seem to belie the facts of measurements and construction."¹³⁵ This appreciation of the power of color may link back to Arndt's or Scheper's use of color decades earlier. Despite Gropius's acknowledgement of color, most of his buildings were primarily white in the 1920s, and scholar Mark Wigley has understood Gropius's architecture as partially defined by its whiteness.¹³⁶ Robin Rehm, in his discussion of the coloration of the Dessau Bauhaus, discussed Gropius's interest in and use of white, tracing it back to his work with Peter Behrens. According to Rehm, white remained for Gropius his preferred color choice through the next decades, even in the Dessau buildings.¹³⁷

A more straightforward way to visualize any difference in Gropius's thinking on color between 1923–24 and 1926 is to compare his offices in Weimar and Dessau. The Weimar office, renovated in 1923–24 and painted by the wall painting department in summer 1923, used color to help define the space as a set of nesting cubes inside the Henry van de Velde building. In Dessau,

¹³⁵ Walter Gropius, *Scope of Total Architecture* (New York: Harper, 1955), 29.

¹³⁶ Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, 97.

¹³⁷ Robin Rehm, *Das Bauhausgebäude in Dessau: Die Ästhetischen Kategorien Zweck Form Inhalt* (Berlin: Mann, 2005), 110–11.

Scheper designed a color scheme for Gropius's office in his own building. The space is only partially restored, but it is also documented in Scheper's reflected ceiling plan with elevations (figure 3.52).¹³⁸ The design was subtle and did not establish its own cubic dimensions as in Weimar, but the colors defined the inherent architectural features. The yellow upholstered furniture, first designed for the Weimar office, is used again in the Dessau room, and this color was mirrored in the ceiling painting. In contrast to the yellow section of ceiling in Weimar, used to form a subspace—an imagined interior cubic space in the room, the yellow on the ceiling in Dessau was painted on the structurally recessed ceiling area, highlighting the distinct, physical architectural feature (figure 3.53). Paint and color in Gropius's Dessau office did much less work and followed the already present form of the architecture.

Gropius may have been pushed to his limit in the Haus Auerbach, with Arndt's use of color to break apart his architecture. After this colorful moment, his buildings became more white and gray. Although we do not know the working relationship between Gropius and Scheper, nor between Gropius and Arndt, the two wall painters wanted colors to be active in the architecture but realized that goal differently. Scheper was already on his own path toward using color as subordinate to the architecture, but his later wall paintings are not at all white. By 1924, the wall painting workshop had clearly abandoned any pictorial wall painting and the application of art to the wall and had now shifted to using artistic sensibility to apply color schemes to architecture in innovative, individualized, and inventive ways. The future coloration of the wall surfaces at the Bauhaus, as will be discussed in the next chapter, however will be in the development of a standardized, generalized, and mass produced color—Bauhaus wallpaper.

¹³⁸ This is discussed in detail in Schöbe, "Black and White or Colour?."

Chapter Four

Mass-Produced Wall Color: Bauhaus Wallpaper

After the opening of the new Bauhaus building in Dessau where Hinnerk Scheper and the wall painting workshop painted Walter Gropius's building, highlighting structure, organization, and function, the workshop continued to steadily focus attention on developing wall color schemes, bringing color to the walls. They painted the new Masters' Houses down the street from the school building and began to work on the nearby Dessau-Törten housing estate designed by Gropius.¹ Scheper and his students also undertook other private commissions. For example, Scheper worked as a color designer for the Museum Folkwang in Essen from 1927 to 1930 and student Heinrich Koch designed a color scheme for the King Albert Museum in Zwickau. As Alexander Schawinsky noted, Koch, "became a color ambassador, travelled from city to city to oversee the work on the designs."² Toward the end of the 1920s, the wall painting workshop's persistence in utilizing color in architecture shifted from the application of subtle and technically complex painted wall surfaces to the mass production of wall color via wallpaper. Resisting a growing fashion for white walls, this new Bauhaus product concluded the wall painting workshop's efforts to integrate color into architecture. For the first time, it made the workshop financially viable.

¹ For lengthier discussions of these color schemes see *Gropius, Meisterhaus Mucbe/Schlemmer*; Michels, *Architektur und Kunst: Das Meisterhaus Kandinsky-Klee in Dessau*; Andreas Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten: Rationalität als Ästhetisches Programm* (Dresden: Thelem, 2010); Renate Scheper, *Colourful! The Wallpainting Workshop at the Bauhaus* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 2005).

² Alexander Schawinsky, "Fragment of Autobiography," Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, quoted in Scheper, *Colourful!*, 130.

The wallpaper project was born from a need for a successful commercial product and income for the school, coinciding with the integration of the wall painting workshop into the new *Ausbau*—interior design—department. The institutional changes that occurred in 1928, following the departure of Gropius, Bayer and Moholy-Nagy and the appointment of Meyer as Bauhaus director, brought a new direction, organization, and curriculum, which was critical for the development of the wallpaper project. This chapter will focus on the wallpaper as a student project and as a culmination of Scheper's lessons in wall painting, as well as with the students' experiences working in the Dessau-Törten housing estate. The task of painting the walls of this large housing estate was enormous, labor intensive, and expensive. In addition, the issue of individual taste had been a concern in the wall painting workshop since it was established in 1919 and, further, each resident wanted input in the coloration of his or her space. Wallpaper addressed and resolved many of the issues that arose in the painting of the housing estate.

Students Howard Dearstyne, Herman Fischer, and Hans Fischli developed patterns, many of which were selected for inclusion in wallpaper collections; their accounts and extant samples of the designs provide a glimpse into the production process. Unfortunately, I do not know of any surviving in-situ installations of the original wallpaper. The Bauhaus wallpaper manufactured by Rasch & Company, specifically the first collections in 1930, will be considered at length in this chapter, as will the marketing and advertising materials that extolled the wallpaper's affordability, durability, standard colors, and functionality. Although the resulting designs and overall approach differed, the Bauhaus product will also be considered in comparison to contemporary wallpaper designs by Le Corbusier, who shared with the Bauhaus the aspiration to develop a method for applying color and texture to the wall without the problems of paint. The difficulty and continually changing approach of the wall painting

workshop toward applying painting and color to the walls, from the first wall paintings of Weimar to the wall color schemes of Dessau, found a conclusion and solution in the simple yet interesting, colorful yet neutral, and personal yet standardized Bauhaus wallpapers.

The wallpaper that the Bauhaus ended up creating was nearly monochrome, subtly textured, and faintly patterned. It came in a number of colors, and was distinctly unlike the usual floral and elaborate decorative patterns typical of nineteenth and early twentieth century. The wallpaper project also included the development of Bauhaus advertising work. This successful partnership with industry helped finance the last three years of the school's existence. Many Bauhäusler were involved in the development of the wallpaper: from Scheper, who gave technical and theoretical lessons in color and wall painting; to the students, who created the designs; to the Bauhaus masters, who selected and supervised the manufacturing process. The project was ultimately a group effort.

The unawareness in common perception of the Bauhaus for financially successful wallpaper was partially reversed when the seminal 2009 Bauhaus exhibitions in United States and Germany included Bauhaus-designed wallpaper and their corresponding advertisements in the installations and exhibition catalogues.³ Juliet Kinchin's essay in the Museum of Modern Art catalogue discussed the wallpaper designs as the unknown success story of the Bauhaus and the enduring legacy of Bauhaus design.⁴ The same year Claude Lichtenstein discussed the wallpaper and its advertisements, specifically Joost Schmidt's title page for the wallpaper catalogue, in

³ Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, *Bauhaus 1919–1933: Workshops for Modernity* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009); Bauhaus-Archiv, Museum für Gestaltung, Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, and Klassik Stiftung Weimar, eds., *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009).

⁴ Juliet Kinchin, "Wallpaper Design," in *Bauhaus, 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*, ed. Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 292–95.

Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model.⁵ Earlier, Hans Wingler’s foundational text discussed the wallpaper briefly, stressing the involvement of wallpaper company owner Emil Rasch, who became a great supporter of the Bauhaus.⁶ In the decades after the school’s closing, Rasch was a champion of the legacy of the institution, supporting Wingler’s book and the establishment of Bauhaus Archiv in Darmstadt in the 1960s. Despite the links between Rasch and the Bauhaus legacy, the wallpaper has not become an iconic element of the school’s history; for example, it is not nearly as celebrated as Marcel Breuer’s chairs or Marianne Brandt’s lamps.

Scholarship specifically focused on the wallpaper project and its relationship with industry and the marketplace has usually assigned credit for its success to its branding and the Bauhaus reputation. In his essay, “Utopia for Sale: The Bauhaus and Weimar Germany’s Consumer Culture,” Fredric Schwartz viewed Bauhaus wallpaper as a compromised and, therefore, corrupted vision of the utopian Bauhaus dream and as a manifestation of the fashionable craze for a Bauhaus style.⁷ He reported on the difficulties of Bauhaus products, including the wallpaper, when they became part of the capitalist marketplace. The Bauhaus wallpaper was not unique or even particularly innovative, he wrote, rather “in the end it was the name, the cachet, one could say the aura of the Bauhaus that was its chief asset.”⁸ This point of view was also found throughout the very important *Bauhaustapete: Advertising & Success of a*

⁵ Claude Lichtenstein, “Modern Wallpaper for Every Room, Joost Schmidt’s Title Page for the Bauhaus Wallpaper Catalogue,” in *Bauhaus: A Conceptual Model*, ed. Museum für Gestaltung Bauhaus-Archiv, Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, and Klassik Stiftung Weimar (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 301–04.

⁶ Hans Maria Wingler, *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1976), 466, 518.

⁷ Frederic J. Schwartz, “Utopia for Sale: The Bauhaus and Weimar Germany’s Consumer Culture,” in *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War*, ed. Kathleen James (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 115–38.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

Brand-name published in 1995.⁹ This book, the only text dedicated to the story of Bauhaus wallpaper, was produced in close association with Rasch and Company. This chapter builds upon the valuable data included in the book about the development of the affiliation of Rasch with the Bauhaus, production information, numerous illustrations of advertisements and wallpapers. Because *Bauhaustapete* was largely a discussion of the advertisements and business success of the wallpaper and a celebration of owner Emil Rasch, the book did not include much detailed analysis of the papers and designs themselves. Although at times biased, these essays were also carefully and thoroughly researched, providing a valuable starting point for this discussion.

In her essay in the text, Sabine Thümmler, a specialist in the history of wallpaper, discussed the Bauhaus product in relationship to the building of large housing developments in Germany during the Weimar period and the tensions between *Neues Bauen* architecture and the wallpaper industry.¹⁰ She mentioned the monochrome wallpapers produced for the *Neue Frankfurt* housing development, which preceded the Bauhaus wallpaper, and argued that the innovation and success of Bauhaus product was due to advertising and branding. Thümmler has discussed the Bauhaus product in many essays as well as in her book on the wallpaper industry.¹¹ She contributed to Lesley Hoskins's *The Papered Wall: History, Pattern, Technique*, which

⁹ Burckhard Kieselbach, ed., *auhaustapete: Reklame und Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising and Success of a Brand Name*, trans. Claudia Spinner (Cologne: DuMont, 1995).

¹⁰ Sabine Thümmler, "Architecture Versus Wallpaper—Housing Development Wallpaper and Bauhaus," in *Bauhaustapete: Reklame und Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising und Success of a Brandname*, ed. Burckhard Kieselbach (Köln: DuMont, 1995), 11–19. Despite this association by Thümmler and her discussion of Ernst May and Bruno Taut's housing projects, she did not discuss the Bauhaus's own experience with mass housing or the link between the wall painting workshop and the Dessau Törten housing estate.

¹¹ Sabine Thümmler, *Die Geschichte der Tapete: Raumkunst aus Papier: Aus den Beständen des Deutschen Tapetenmuseums Kassel* (Eurasburg: Minerva, 1998). Her essays are the first English language discussions of the project and, given her background as an historian of wallpaper, she provides a rich context of the wallpaper industry of the time. Thümmler's texts, including those in German, provide valuable background on the wallpaper industry and a discussion of expressionist and Art Deco wallpaper trends and other monochrome modern examples.

compiled essays by scholars from all over the world on the history of wallpaper, on topics such as single-sheet papers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to wallpaper trends since the 1970s.¹² Thümmler's contribution, "Unsteady Progress: From the Turn of the Century to the Second World War," summarized the different styles of wallpaper from early twentieth century Jugendstil and Art Deco designs through the monochrome textured wallpapers of the mid-1920s and the revival of historical trends of the 1930s, with the Bauhaus wallpaper as her primary example of neutral wallpaper of the 1920s.¹³ The main arguments that run throughout her writings are that wallpapers in modernist architecture were a reaction to and an improvement upon painted walls and that the wallpaper patterns and colors were an imitation of painted wall surfaces.¹⁴ Thümmler briefly mentioned the nuances and complexity of the wallpaper, although she also frequently diminished and purposefully defused any sense that Bauhaus wallpaper was innovative by quoting from a number of contemporary wallpaper trade magazines, such as the *Deutsche Tapetenzeitung*, which opined that "Bauhaus wallpaper is certainly nothing exceptionally new for the specialist."¹⁵

Thümmler conducted most of her research before completed restorations of the Dessau Bauhaus buildings and other examples of colorful wall paintings, including some units of the Dessau-Törten housing estate and, because of this, she presumed that the Bauhaus wall painting workshop used only a passive color scheme, arguing, like many others, that Scheper "favored a

¹² Lesley Hoskins, ed., *The Papered Wall: History, Pattern, Technique* (New York: Abrams, 1994).

¹³ Sabine Thümmler, "Unsteady Progress: From the Turn of the Century to the Second World War," in *The Papered Wall: History, Pattern, Technique*, ed. Lesley Hoskins (New York: Abrams, 1994).

¹⁴ Thümmler, "The Wall Painting Workshop."

¹⁵ *Deutsche Tapetenzeitung*, 100, quoted in Thümmler, "Unsteady Progress," 190.

subtle, very pale color scheme with subdued pastel colors.”¹⁶ As this dissertation proves, Bauhaus wall painting was much more varied and often brighter than this restricted reading of Scheper’s output. This chapter expands and complicates Thümmeler’s earlier research, updating with the latest research and color restorations, and adding a discussion of earlier and contemporaneous wall painting.

Even in the comprehensive text, *Bauhaustapete*, no consensus exists about who came up with the concept. Renate Scheper’s primarily argued that the project was the inspiration of Scheper.¹⁷ But Scheper was on sabbatical in the Soviet Union when the designs for the wallpaper were being finalized and the product was in production. Others have emphasized the importance of Emil Rasch in developing the concept for Bauhaus wallpaper.¹⁸ The reason why the authors of *Bauhaustapete*, and later Schwartz focused closely on the initiation of the *idea* for the product, and its marketing, was because they believed that Bauhaus wallpaper did not fit the criteria of an innovative Bauhaus product. They understand the wallpaper as no different from other products on the market. Schwartz and others are correct in insisting that the marketing and branding of the wallpaper was critical to its success, but does this mean that the wallpaper was a failure or a compromised vision? A narrow definition of wallpaper and a bias against it as a bourgeois, decorative, and even effeminate product, lingers in some of these discussions; this is exactly the kind of mundane and traditional product that the Bauhaus was supposed to counteract.

¹⁶ Thümmeler, “The Wall Painting Workshop,” 460.

¹⁷ Renate Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” in *Bauhaustapete: Reklame und Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising und success of a brandname*, ed. Burckhard Kieselbach, trans. Claudia Spinner (Cologne: DuMont, 1995), 88–97.

¹⁸ Werner Möller, “‘No Risk, No Gain’: Strategies for the Bauhaus Wallpaper,” in *Bauhaustapete: Reklame und Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising und Success of a Brandname*, ed. Burckhard Kieselbach (Cologne: DuMont, 1995), 21–74.

These sources did not closely examine the wallpapers, which are described using general words like “monochrome” and “subtly textured,” without going into further detail. In this chapter I will consider some of the individual designs, examining the many bold color choices and analyzing a few of the patterns in detail, and I will discuss the designs and color in terms of the overall goals of the wall painting workshop. In addition, I will consider many of the advertisements and promotional materials developed by the Bauhaus advertising workshop. Unlike previous scholars, I believe these are important to understanding the wallpaper, not just because they were part of a Bauhaus style or market image, but rather for what they say about the wallpaper itself.

In her book *Colourful!* and in essays that discuss the wallpaper, Renate Scheper focused largely on Hinnerk Scheper’s contribution to the product, often quoting his text concerning the Bauhaus wallpaper from 1955, when his own new line of wallpapers was hitting the market.¹⁹ This chapter considers the wallpaper as a continuation of Scheper’s 1925–1929 wall painting workshop, but without Renate Scheper’s limited focus on her father-in-law. As Wingler pointed out, during the wallpaper project’s implementation from 1929 to 1930 it was Alfred Arndt who was the leader of the workshop, not Scheper.²⁰ The other members of the wallpaper supervision committee, including Arndt and Josef Albers, helped shape the first collection of 1930, as did the students who actually developed the designs. Hannes Meyer’s support, theories, and belief in standardized, useful, and colorful building materials opened the conceptual door for wallpaper. This chapter also examines the students such as Hans Fischli and Herman Fischer, looking at

¹⁹ Scheper, *Colourful!*; Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*. Renate Scheper used this much later statement as if it was written at the time of 1929 production.

²⁰ Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 466.

their involvement in this successful project and their experience of studying in the workshop at the time of the wallpaper project.

Because Bauhaus wallpapers are not very well known or studied, they have not been thoroughly compared to the contemporaneous wallpaper designs of Le Corbusier or those from *Das Neue Frankfurt*. Since the *Neue Frankfurt* designs have not been published, they are outside the scope of this dissertation.²¹ On the other hand, Le Corbusier's wallpapers are well researched. Rüegg's substantial discussion of Le Corbusier's polychrome architecture and wallpaper included comparisons with Bruno Taut and de Stijl but not the Bauhaus.²² Color application in interiors, by both the Bauhaus wall painting workshop and Le Corbusier, and their nearly simultaneous development of wallpapers, necessitates a comparison. For both, wallpaper was not an insulated project, but a continuation of an interest in wall color and color in architecture, and a reapplication of that goal with mass production in mind. For the Bauhaus, it was perhaps the most effective wall painting workshop project because it could bring colored walls to the masses.

Two exhibitions bracket the development and success of Bauhaus wallpaper and provide a context for the product's development within the field of *Neues Bauen* architecture. In 1927, the German Werkbund opened the Weissenhof housing development, on Weissenhof Hill in Stuttgart.²³ This exhibition, commonly associated with whiteness and sometimes described as a

²¹ The wallpapers are mentioned but not discussed at length in Susan R. Henderson, *Building Culture: Ernst May and the New Frankfurt am Main Initiative, 1926–1931*, Studies in Modern European History, ed. Frank J. Coppa, vol. 64 (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 120.

²² Arthur Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale: Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959*, rev. ed. (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2006). See also Heer, *The Architectonic Colour—Polychromy In The Purist Architecture Of Le Corbusier*, 143–64.

²³ Karin Kirsch, *The Weissenhofsiedlung: Experimental Housing Built for the Deutscher Werkbund, Stuttgart, 1927* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989); Richard Pommer and Christian F. Otto,

white housing estate, showcased the most innovative modernist architects of the day including Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and others.²⁴ Although many of these buildings integrated color into their designs, the overall image of modern architecture projected at the exhibition was that of whiteness.²⁵ As Wigley has discussed in *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, “the exhibition was critical in determining the fate of the white wall,” and “played a crucial role in... the dissemination of the white wall throughout the international domain of architectural practice.”²⁶ And as he has shown, this emphasis on whiteness continued and most modern architecture has been commonly thought to be white. As J. E. Hamman’s 1930 article published in the Werkbund journal *Die Form* put forth, “Weiss, alles weiss” (White, everything white).²⁷ It was in this context, with the drive to blanch or whitewash architecture, that the wall painting workshop of the late 1920s found its purpose. The design and hand painting of individual walls in distinct bright colors that coordinated with the architectonics of buildings in the large housing developments of the late 1920s began to be seen as unfashionable, expensive, and impractical. By 1931, Bruno Taut explained, “color was considered part of romanticism. White became the order of the day.”²⁸ As the pressure for more whiteness and less painting in architecture intensified, and in the wake of this exhibition, Bauhaus wallpaper was developed. The product maintained an emphasis on the use of color in

Weissenhof 1927 and the Modern Movement in Architecture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²⁴ It was acutally named after Philip and Sebastian Weiss. Overy, *Light, Air & Openness*, 187.

²⁵ Kenneth Frampton described this exhibition as “the first international manifestation of that white, prismatic, flat-roofed mode of building which was to be identified in 1932 as the International Style.” Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 4th ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010).

²⁶ Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, 303.

²⁷ J.E. Hammann, “Weiss, alles Weiss: Von der Wertstellung der Farbe weiss in unserer Zeit,” *Die Form* 5, no. 5 (1930): 121.

²⁸ Bruno Taut, “Die Farbe,” *Die Farbige Stadt* 6, no. 3 (June 20, 1931): 29–30, quoted in Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, 309.

architecture and on the wall, but it also resulted in a useful mass-produced and mass-market Bauhaus product.

In 1931, Bauhaus wallpaper launched its second collection. In Berlin, the German Building Exhibition presented the current state and future potential of German building production. This large-scale exhibition, which, like *Weissenhof*, was organized by Mies van der Rohe, was not focused on the white cubes of the exterior, but on building materials and the interior. Bauhaus wallpaper was prominently featured, and many designers used the new product for their interiors in “The Dwelling of Our Times” section of the exhibition. In older buildings with flaking plaster and uneven wall surfaces, as well as in new, hastily constructed housing developments, such as the Dessau-Törten housing estate, paint had proved to be unsatisfactory to builders and architects. Both the old and new building would now benefit from a fast, cheap, and effective colored wallpaper that created a modernist interior for the future. In the four years between these two exhibitions, Bauhaus wallpaper was able to balance the desire for white modern building with a need for a product to cover wall surfaces.

The Training and Toil of Wall Painting

Scheper’s leadership of the Bauhaus wall painting workshop began in 1925 when the school first moved to Dessau and continued until he temporarily left in July 1929 to establish an architectural color workshop in the Soviet Union. He was invited to establish an advisory committee for painting and decoration, called Malyarstroi. While in Moscow, Scheper set up an office and worked on many different projects, including the coloration of the Narkomfin housing complex, designed by Moisei Yakovlevich Ginsburg and Ignatii Milinis.²⁹ He returned to Dessau

²⁹ Scheper, *Colourful!*; Johannes Cramer and Anke Zalivako, *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012) Dom Narkomfina—das Haus des Volkskommissariates für Finanzen*,

a year later, but during his absence Alfred Arndt had taken over the workshop, which had been merged with the new interior design department by Meyer. After this point, wall painting ceased to be an independent workshop, although the Bauhaus wallpaper project—its largest venture—continued. Scheper’s earlier wall painting workshop established the foundation of the project in early 1929. The previous chapter discussed Scheper’s designs and leadership preceding and up through the 1926 painting of the new Bauhaus school building in Dessau. Under Scheper’s instruction in the wall painting workshop from 1926 to 1928, the students were given the training, skills, experiences, and preliminary lessons necessary for the creation of Bauhaus wallpaper.

Scheper’s instruction in the workshop was heavily focused on the technical side of painting. He taught his students about color relationships, their application through paint, and the creation of different wall surfaces and textures. As illustrated in contemporary photographs, the students honed their craft by testing colors and techniques on the wall of the Dessau studio (figure 4.1–4.3). The students worked with a spray gun and also painted furniture by hand. In accounts written years later, two students from this Dessau period, Howard Dearstyne and Hans Fischli, remembered the rigorous training. Dearstyne recalled that Scheper was “a complete master of his craft of wall painting, his quiet demeanor helped to convey this to his students.”³⁰

The course of study in the workshop consisted of classes on painting grounds, historical painting

(Petersberg: Imhof, 2013); Monika Markgraf, “Arbeitsplatz Moskau: Der Bauhaus-Meister Hinnerk Scheper und das Narkomfin-Haus,” in *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012): Dom Narkomfina—das Haus des Volkskommissariates für Finanzen*, ed. Johannes Cramer and Anke Zalivako (Petersberg: Imhof, 2013), 63–71; Stephan Buttchereit, “Die farbige Gestaltung des Narkomfin-Hauses,” in *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012): Dom Narkomfina—das Haus des Volkskommissariates für Finanzen*, ed. Johannes Cramer and Anke Zalivako (Petersberg: Imhof, 2013), 75–89.

³⁰ Howard Dearstyne, *Inside the Bauhaus*, ed. David A Spaeth (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 147. Dearstyne was left with extremely uncomformable eczema on his hands from this exercise.

techniques, new experimental techniques, and practice with color schemes on architectural models, draftsmanship and lessons on business management. The students practiced a great deal on the walls of the studio.³¹

Fischli learned the basics of wall painting in the workshop such as the proper way to hold a brush, the smell of the different paints, the need for patience as the paint dries, and the difference between various materials, supports, and applications. The students also learned faux painting methods and techniques, like fresco and sgraffito. They would paint and repaint the walls of the studio. Fischli wrote, “It was wonderful, because after three days it was all done away with and handed over to the past, one had been a Michelangelo, the other Leonardo.”³² They were continually practicing and perfecting the skills of a wall painter, but few new commissions or opportunities appeared for them to use their skills and generate income for the still strapped for cash school.

In addition to these written accounts, two tempera on paper studies by student Lothar Lang from around 1926–1927, now in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin, demonstrate the wide variety of colors used in the workshop and Scheper’s lessons on the integration of color within interior spaces.³³ Lang graduated from the Bauhaus in spring 1931 with a degree in *baulehre* (architectural theory). His diploma and transcript in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin provides a

³¹ Ibid., 148.

³² “Das was herrlich, denn nach drei Tagen wurde alles wieder weggemacht und der Vergangenheit übergeben; einer war Michelangelo, der andere Leonardo gewesen.” Hans Fischli, *Hans Fischli als Maler und Zeichner* (Waldkirch: Waldkircher Verlagsgesellschaft, 1972), 45.

³³ The circa 1926 date of these two studies seems improbable because Lang began his enrollment in the foundations course in fall 1926. These works must be from 1927 or 1928, when he was enrolled in Scheper’s wall painting workshop.

description of his courses and participation in different departments.³⁴ He was enrolled in the foundations course in winter 1926–1927 and took courses with Albers, Kandinsky and Klee. After a leave of absence in summer 1927, he re-enrolled for the winter 1927–28 semester as a member of the wall painting workshop.³⁵ The first of his works is a study of the effects of bright and dark colors on an imagined space or, as it is labeled, “darkness of color against the luminous intensity of the wall surface” (figure 4.4).³⁶ Mostly these color combinations followed Schepers’ prescription in his 1930 essay that the color designer should always consider the light and enhance the space of the room using colors, and that each room should have its own color plan, adjusted for its specific use and conditions.³⁷ In this Lang study, four corners of a room, each with either a window or a door on the right wall, are simply depicted and then colored. The rendered spaces, depending on the combination of light and dark colors, gives the visual impression of either receding into space or pushing out into it. In one example in the upper left, a dark blue on the floor is contrasted with a middle shade of bluish gray on the long side wall and light blue on the window wall. The brightest, lightest color is used on the window wall, which enhances its luminosity and is juxtaposed with the darker tones. This is also true of the bottom left study, in which the dark brown floor contrasts with the bright red-pink of the long side wall and bright yellow of the window wall. Again, the window wall is brightened by yellow and

³⁴ Lothar Lang, “Bauhaus-Diplom nr.45,” June 10, 1931, Lothar Lang Papers, Lang Mappe 1, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

³⁵ In the workshop courses he had training in the craft and theories of painting but he also took courses with Klee and Moholy-Nagy. Lang took another leave of absence from September to mid-October to work on the German Trades Union School project, discussed below. Lang’s role is not clear but he may have been a wall painting workshop representative. Afterwards, in winter 1928–29, he was enrolled in the architecture department and then in summer 1930, in the interior design department. Ibid.

³⁶ Lothar Lang, *Color Study: Dunkelheit Der Farbe Entgegengesetzt Zur Lightstärke Der Wandflächen*, tempera on paper, 1926, Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin.

³⁷ Schepers and Schepers, “Architektur und Farbe.”

seems to push back into space, expanding the room. Lang was practicing using light and dark tones on the different wall surfaces as well as developing specific color palettes with subtle, more neutral colors, as well as brighter, bolder tones.

In a second study, Lang, experimented with different color effects for the large workshop studio in the new Bauhaus building (figure 4.5). This careful and detailed perspective drawing shows the walls of windows and the large concrete pillars and beams that span the interior space. The sides of the beams and pillars closest to the front of the picture plane are colored light orange, bright pink and soft yellow, colors that draw attention to structure. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Scheper's wall painting theory emphasized the importance of using color to enhance and support the architectural structure of the building.

In both of these studies, Lang used a broad array of colors, from blues and greens, to bright pinks and yellows, to softer oranges and grays. The combinations and relationships of colors was one of the important elements of study for wall painting students. They were learning and practicing many different color theories, from those of Wilhelm Ostwald, who lectured at the Bauhaus in June 1927, to those of Hölzel and Runge.³⁸ Many later student color studies have survived in the Bauhaus Archiv. Käte Schmidt's student work from winter 1931–32, her second semester, is illustrative example of Scheper's color instruction (figure 4.6). The study shows the three primary colors in brightly painted circles, under each is a printed description—yellow, for example is “bright, lively, warm, active, prominent, eccentric,” while blue is “dark, quiet, cool, passive, receding and concentric.”³⁹ The colors produce mood and spatial characteristics, and the primaries are shown in relationship to the secondaries—green, orange, and brown, with arrows

³⁸ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 39.

³⁹ “hell, lebhaft, warm, aktiv, hervortretend, exzentrisch” and “dunkel, ruhig, kühl, passiv, zurücktretend, konzentrisch.”

and lines connecting them. As an anonymous student described in 1932, “Scheper is a genius when it comes to colors,”⁴⁰ and he conveyed some of his color sense to the students.

While Lang and other wall painting students painted the walls of the studio or made small studies on paper, they also developed and installed wall paintings onsite for commission. The student diplomas, like those of Lang and fellow wall painting student Fischer, listed student’s courses and major projects. The most significant and well-documented wall painting project for most of these students was the painting of the new Dessau-Törten housing development. This project provided the students with hands-on painting and designing experience, but it also was an important lesson in the need for a high-quality, modern wallpaper, a product that could make the wall painter’s work faster and cheaper and more effectively cover the surfaces of the mass-produced, uneven walls of the housing development.

One of the benefits of the Bauhaus moving to Dessau in 1925 was the potential to build a large housing estate, a long-time goal of Gropius. In 1926, the city hired him to build a development on the edge of the city that became known as the Dessau-Törten housing estate (figure 4.7). The Bauhaus workshops, particularly the wall painting workshop, were involved in this project over the course of three construction phases. Andreas Schwarting’s scholarship on the housing project, including his 2010 *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten: Rationalität als ästhetische Programm*, is extensive.⁴¹ In addition to carefully charting each phase of construction, Schwarting’s text also discussed the coloration of the development. He included contemporary descriptions of color and examined a number of restoration investigations of individual units,

⁴⁰ M., “A Swiss Architecture Student Writes to a Swiss Architect about the Bauhaus Dessau, in ‘Information’ No. 3 Aug.–Sept. 1932,” in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1976), 175.

⁴¹ Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten*.

which took place in the 1990s and the 2000s. These restorations have yielded findings pertaining to the original coloration of both the exterior and interior. He compared these results with the few surviving plans by wall painting students Heinrich Koch, Fritz Kuhr, and Werner Isaacsohn. In the end, however, Schwarting was unable to establish many concrete conclusions about color in these buildings. The documents are too fragmentary and the restoration investigations too few and inconclusive.

An analysis of the wall color schemes of this project is apt for a discussion of Bauhaus wallpaper. The housing estate consumed the attention of almost all well-documented students of the wall painting workshop. They developed plans for using color in mass housing, just as Scheper did a few years later in his work in Moscow.⁴² As the students spent hours painting the ceilings and walls of these buildings, they gained valuable experience in understanding the effects of surface textures and colors in an interior space and also saw the need for streamlining the labor-intensive painting process with the development of fast and effective wallpaper.

The wall painting students worked on this project from the initial stages. Two model units, which were furnished and painted by the Bauhaus workshops, were finished by the 1926 opening of the Dessau school building. A black-and-white photograph, by Erich Consemüller, depicting the living room of one of these homes suggests that different colors and materials were used on the ceilings and walls, depending on the function of the space (figure 4.8). Fischli discussed working on the project and income earned by the wall painting students, while honing their craft, painting the model units from top to bottom.⁴³ He painted alongside fellow student Margret Leiteritz and specifically mentioned that through the process of painting he learned the difference between good construction techniques and the cheap, shoddy workmanship of the

⁴² See Cramer and Zalivako, *Das Narkomfin-Kommunehaus in Moskau (1928-2012)*.

⁴³ Fischli, *Hans Fischli als Maler und Zeichner*, 45.

mass-produced buildings.⁴⁴ Noticing all the small details, such as the uneven walls and rough surfaces, must have been a frustrating aspect of the work, and further explains the student's approval and support for the development of wallpaper. These small defects, an inevitable result of mass construction, could be hidden more effectively and faster with wallpaper than with paint.

Fischli also mentioned the colors used in these model units. The ceilings in the living rooms were light blue and pink, and all the walls were painted with washable cream color.⁴⁵ Although the black-and-white photograph only hints at the possible coloration, Fischli's description of lighter walls with more brightly colored ceilings correspond to most of the surviving student plans, and have been supported by some restoration investigations. As Schwarting discussed, many of the plans include brighter colors on the ceilings, with more subdued, off-white colors on the walls, and these differed from room to room and floor to floor.⁴⁶ In his 1930 essay on architecture and color, Scheper discussed the use of the painted ceiling verses the white ceiling, stating that a colored ceiling would be superior for making the rooms cozier without enclosing them or making them feel smaller.⁴⁷

The students of Scheper's workshop used a whole range of colors throughout the ten surviving designs for the housing estate. Heinrich Koch's 1927 color plan for the ceilings includes yellow, orange, shades of brown, gray, black, violet, light green, light blue, off-white,

⁴⁴ Hans Fischli, "Erinnerungen an Margaret Leiteritz," in *Die Bauhaus Künstlerin Margaret Leiteritz: Gemalte Diagramme*, ed. Klaus E. R. Lindemann (Karlsruhe: Info Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993), 15, quoted in Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten*, 64.

⁴⁵ Fischli, "Erinnerungen an Margaret Leiteritz," 15. In addition to the walls and ceilings, all the metal was painted aluminum bronze, and the hot and cold water feeds in the bathroom were yellow and blue, respectively

⁴⁶ Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten*, 168–72.

⁴⁷ Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe."

and pink (figure 4.9).⁴⁸ In another Koch color plan, light blues and grays are dominant, but on key walls, such as the external wall of the double story staircase, a rich red is used (figure 4.10). While Koch used light pastel blues and grays or richer earth tones, like dark red, Fritz Kuhr used a lighter and brighter color palette or soft-ice cream colors for his 1927 plan (figure 4.11–4.12). These pastel colors are similar to those colors Arndt used in the Haus Auerbach in Jena in 1924 (figure 3.6), but they are also similar to Scheper's colors for the Narkomfin mass housing project in Moscow, which he supervised during his leave of absence from 1929 to 1930 (figure 4.13). From all of these surviving plans for the Dessau-Törten housing estate it is clear that the students were experimenting with a number of color combinations, and for the most part they followed Scheper's system and strategy of using color primarily on the ceilings, although not his exact color palette.

In the Dessau-Törten plans, the colors are often quite different from room to room, according to function and use. As Scheper explained, the building must be thought of as a whole. "The general coloration of a building must be based on a plan, it should contain a series of gradations and contrasts, it should 'organize' the individual functional parts and make a harmonic impression, which can be repeated in individual details."⁴⁹ In Koch's plan the colors on the first floor are darker and more earth-toned, while the second floor is lighter, with pastels, and the contrasts of these colors would dynamize and stimulate the inhabitant as they moved through the spaces. The students seemed to be echoing more of Scheper's methodological ideas when they used color to highlight and stress the structure of the building, a major tenant of

⁴⁸ Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten*, 86. Schwarting believed that this drawing, because of its layout and its relation to a restored building, was probably a working drawing meant for application in this unit type.

⁴⁹ Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe," 73.

Scheper's color and wall painting theory (much discussed in his 1930 essay).⁵⁰ Koch's isometric drawing for building type II distinguishes between the load-bearing external walls and the internal partition walls (figure 4.10).⁵¹ A note on the plan labels the exterior walls as white and the interior walls as gray. This color distinction reinforces the structure of the architecture with color.

The wall painting students gained valuable experience while producing their plans. They might have also been able to practice their painting techniques and technical skills if these plans were implemented. If so, their work was hard. However, it was not feasible to have the Bauhaus wall painters design and hand-paint all the walls and ceilings for each unit. It became obvious that painting each unit was taking too much time and money. The residents would also have resisted having their individual units colored by the wall painting workshop, because each had his or her own taste. Schwarting surmised that the new residents of the Dessau-Törten housing estate were often given blank, white units to color as they chose, perhaps by seeking the guidance of the wall painting workshop or Gropius's private architectural office.⁵²

As discussed earlier in this dissertation, the choice of wall color is highly contested, personal, and sometimes controversial. Therefore, a cheap, effective and durable wallpaper was needed to allow for personal choice. The consumer or the architect could select from a range of acceptable and vetted colors and patterns, creating his or her own personalized Bauhaus space. On the downside, many of the well-developed and practiced effects and strategies of Bauhaus wall painting were lost in the transfer to wallpaper. Wallpaper is usually only applied on the vertical wall surfaces and not the ceiling, which was the primary locations for the application of

⁵⁰ Scheper and Scheper, "Architektur und Farbe."

⁵¹ Schwarting, *Die Siedlung Dessau-Törten*, 101.

⁵² There is no documentation, however, to suggest that the students worked with residents individually. Ibid.

color for Bauhaus wall painters. In exchange for a successful product, the workshop gave up considerable control over the spaces and the ability to precisely sculpt the architecture with colors. But with this loss of control came the ability for the Bauhaus to cheaply bring its aesthetic, color, and pattern choices to thousands of homes across the country, even after the closing of the school itself. The experiences of the Dessau-Törten were certainly fresh on the minds of many of the young students who made the Bauhaus wallpaper a reality.

Hannes Meyer, Color in Architecture, and Bauhaus Wallpaper

The significant role of Hannes Meyer, the director of the school following Gropius's departure in spring 1928 is another critical element to understanding the development of Bauhaus wallpaper. Meyer's term was terminated in August 1930 by Mayor Hesse of Dessau. As Droste described, Meyer was the "unknown Bauhaus director," and only since the late 1980s and early 1990s has his leadership been re-examined in earnest.⁵³ He arrived at the Bauhaus in April 1927 as the head of the new architecture department. He was Gropius's chosen replacement, and as Droste discussed, he reorganized the workshops and made many other changes, including the unification of the metal, joinery, and wall painting workshops into a new interior design workshop.⁵⁴ Despite what scholars like Renate Scheper or Sabine Thümmeler have argued about the importance of Hinnerk Scheper or Emil Rasch to the initiation of Bauhaus wallpaper, Meyer's involvement made the wallpaper project possible.

The development and implementation of the wallpaper during Meyer's directorship may help to explain the lack of notoriety for this successful product. For decades, any aspect of

⁵³ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933*, 166. For a historiographical analysis of scholarship on Meyer and the problematic narrative of his directorship, see Dara. Kiese, "Entfesselt Bauen Building Unleashed: Holistic Education in Hannes Meyer's Bauhaus, 1927–1930." (PhD diss, City University of New York, 2013).

⁵⁴ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919–1933*, 170–71.

Meyer's Bauhaus was tainted by accusations of Marxism and functionalism. However, as more recent scholarship has shown, this bias against Meyer is largely unfounded and misconstrued.⁵⁵ Following these recent revisions, Meyer's contribution to the wall painting workshop must not be ignored.⁵⁶ In reading Meyer's writings and examining his buildings from the Bauhaus period, it is clear that he was well aware of the major concerns and goals of the wall painting workshop to integrate color with architecture. In addition, he was dedicated to the use of mass-produced and utilitarian products for everyday life and building. Meyer's rhetoric on the natural color of materials and their functional uses are comparable to and echoed in Hinnerk Scheper's essay on color, written in 1930 while in Moscow, where Meyer would also separately visit in 1930.

In contrast to Gropius, who did not write significantly about color in architecture and who left a string of mostly white buildings, Meyer was more explicit about color and his architecture is not as starkly white as many of his contemporaries. In his manifesto "Die Neue Welt" (The New World) published in *Das Werk* in 1926,⁵⁷ he discussed the use of new materials, including Ripolin, the same paint that for Le Corbusier became an emblem of whitewashing and covering wallpaper.⁵⁸ But, unlike Le Corbusier, Meyer merely listed this material amongst many others, and did not proclaim or extoll its whiteness in particular. His major concerns were

⁵⁵ Kiese, "Entfesseltes Bauen Building Unleashed."

⁵⁶ For example Meyer brought Arndt back to the Bauhaus. The relationship between Arndt and Meyer is discussed in Christian Wolsdorff, ed., *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898–1976* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999). For more on Meyer, see: K. Michael Hays, *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: The Architecture of Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Hilberseimer* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992); Hannes Meyer and Werner Kleinerüschkamp, *Hannes Meyer, 1889–1954: Architekt, Urbanist, Lehrer* (Berlin: Ernst, 1989); Klaus-Jürgen Winkler, *Der Architekt Hannes Meyer: Anschauungen und Werk* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1989).

⁵⁷ Hannes Meyer, "Die Neue Welt," *Das Werk* 13, no. 7 (1926): 205-24.

⁵⁸ Hannes Meyer, "The New World" (1926), in *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings.*, ed. Claude Schnaidt, trans. D.Q Stephenson (Teufen: Arthur Niggli, 1965), 93.

not with the aesthetic purity of the material, but rather with its use and effectiveness. In “Die Neue Welt,” Meyer also mentioned the “natural colour of material and surface texture”⁵⁹ as one of the factors of his “pure construction.” He was not opposed to the incorporation of art onto the walls and he praised Willi Baumeister’s *Mauerbild* as being made “from primary elements, forming a totality, an independent whole.”⁶⁰ Meyer was even clearer about his interest in wall painting and color at the end of his manifesto, when he called for a change of materials and tools: “Instead of frescos, the poster. Instead of painted material, the color of the material itself. (‘Paint without a brush’ yet compelled manually into picture construction.)”⁶¹ Meyer knew that the colors of the material itself would be powerful elements in the architecture and these would help to form or construct the final building.

Two years later in the essay “bauen” (building) published in the *Bauhaus* journal, he again discussed color and its connection to material:

color is to us only a medium of conscious psychological influence or a medium of orientation. color is never false copy of all kinds of building material. we detest colorfulness. paint is to us a protective coating. where color seems psychically indispensable, we include its light reflecting value in our calculations. we avoid a pure white finish on the house: we consider the body of the house to be a accumulation cell for the heat of the sun...⁶²

For Meyer, color clearly was a commanding and important element. It could and should be used to orient the user of a building and to sway the inhabitants in a conscious and planned way, without clandestine or unconscious means. Paint and color were at times necessary; their effect

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 93–95.

⁶¹ Ibid., 95.

⁶² Revised translation. Hannes Meyer, “building” (1928), in *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings.*, ed. Claude Schnaidt, trans. D.Q Stephenson (Teufen: Arthur Niggli, 1965), 95–97; Hannes Meyer, “Building (1928),” in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1976), 153–54.

on the space and their value as light reflectors needed to be included in the planning of a building, just as sunlight, orientation to the landscape, and airflow were factors in planning. Meyer deemed colorfulness terrible, explaining that color should not be used to imitate other materials or be excessively bright. Perhaps most revealing of Meyer's views on color was his declaration against pure white; he believed, as did Scheper, that color could be useful and functional.

Meyer's ideas on color and architecture were put to use in the few building projects executed during his directorship. His most important building commission with the Bauhaus, executed with his design partner Hans Wittwer, was for the Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (General German Trades Union), known as the ADGB, the mission of which was to further the education and training of trade union members (figure 4.14). In 1928, the ADGB opened an architecture competition for the design of a new trade union school in the Berlin suburb of Bernau and Meyer and Wittwer won the competition. Although the exact involvement of the wall painting workshop in the painting of this project is uncertain, the restored building clearly demonstrates Meyer's approach and use of color in architecture, as he allowed the natural colors of the materials to be prominent. A few wall surfaces were colorfully painted and the yellow of the bricks, gray of the concrete, and the red metal supports of beams and window frames were used to create a colorful, and, not at all white, building.

The few discrete painted plaster wall surfaces are primarily found in the residential blocks. The building was designed to follow the organization of the students into twelve cells (or groups) of ten students each. This communal organization was enlivened and made more navigable by the use of color; each block had its own color—green, blue, yellow and red. For example, the green block's entrance off the main window-lined corridor was marked on the entry

doors with green glass inserts, heralding the block's color orientation (figure 4.15). This use of color as orientation followed Meyer's description in his 1928 essay: "Color is to us only a medium of conscious psychological influence or a medium of orientation."⁶³ In the green wing the hallway is painted green from the floor up to the height of the doors (figure 4.16–4.17). The ground floor is a middle-dark green, the second floor a slightly lighter value, and the top floor is a very light green. These plaster walls required a protective coat of paint and the green, therefore, served a functional purpose. Overall in this building, color was not added to the architecture but became part of the architecture itself.

Scheper echoed the use of color for orientation in his 1930 essay and in the Bauhaus building in Dessau (as discussed in chapter 3), where, for example the red of the hallway in front of Gropius's office identified this location as important and indicated the transition from Bauhaus to municipal school (figure 3.40). There were many similarities between Scheper's and Meyer's philosophies of wall painting and color in architecture. Both proclaimed the power of color to alter and shape the psychological effects of the space and the importance of color to brighten a room. They both wanted to utilize the light-reflecting qualities of one color over the other, and for Meyer this quality was particularly important in adding warmth to a building. They both understood the technical usefulness of paint as a protective layer over a wall surface. Their views diverged, however, over the issue of aesthetics. While Meyer understood the usefulness of paint and colors, Scheper also believed in a certain aesthetic or artistic element to color in architecture. He continually referenced the architectonic form of a building and the duty of color to enhance the expression of this form. Meyer, on the other hand, designated his work as

⁶³ Meyer, "building" (1928), in *Hannes Meyer*, 95.

distinctly “building” and not architecture: “architecture as ‘an emotional act of the artist’ has no justification.”⁶⁴

The Schepers’s essay, like Meyer’s, emphasized the goal of standardization and mass production. Scheper critiqued the many cheap but dull, gray, and poorly made instances of mass-produced architecture in the Soviet Union. Meyer also wrote about these problems, explaining that “the new house is a prefabricated building for site assembly; as such it is an industrial product and the work of a variety of specialists.”⁶⁵ Because of these specialists—nameless designers of useful products—the housewife was saved from manual labor. The new housing was a social project for the benefit of the public welfare.⁶⁶ In the context of both Scheper’s and Meyer’s views on wall color and mass production, the wallpaper project could perhaps be seen as an inevitable culmination of their philosophies and the practical experience of painting projects like Dessau-Törten housing estate.

At times, Meyer could also be critical: he had a strong dislike for very bright applied color. He mentioned this specifically when he listed the many ways in which he improved the school in his 1930 letter to the Mayor of Dessau, following his dismissal from the Bauhaus. He described what the Bauhaus was like upon his arrival; “The square was red. The circle was blue. The triangle was yellow. They sat and slept on furniture like colored geometry. They lived in houses like colored sculpture.” For Meyer, these colors and shape associations and the colored furniture and houses were part of a Bauhaus style, which he was “fighting against.” He

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Meyer, “building” (1928), in *Hannes Meyer*.

explained, “Everywhere art had a stranglehold on life.”⁶⁷ Not only does this brief comment provide insight into Meyer’s dislike of bright, colorful walls, but it also makes clear that the wall painting workshop, before Meyer’s arrival, was creating colorful, bright buildings, such as the school building and the Masters’ Houses in Dessau (as discussed in chapter 3). By the end of his tenure, the workshop no longer used the same bright colors; they had developed wallpaper instead. In 1930, he declared the wallpaper one of his greatest accomplishments, which by that time the product had only been on the market for less than a year. Yet its success was already obvious, so that he was able to gloat, “Within one year, 4000 homes had been lined with Bauhaus wallpaper.”⁶⁸

The Story of the Wallpaper Project

By 1929, with the experience of the Dessau-Törten housing estate, Scheper’s instruction, and Meyer’s theories concerning color, the Bauhaus wall painting workshop was primed for the development of a line of wallpapers. The narrative of the origin of Bauhaus wallpaper is often central in the secondary literature, though the stories vary slightly with each telling. Renate Scheper argued that Hinnerk Scheper had the concept for a new kind of wallpaper as early as 1924, when he and his wife wrote a series of letters to Maria Rasch, the ex-Bauhaus student and sister of the wallpaper tycoon Emil.⁶⁹ According to Renate Scheper, her father-in-law’s extensive work on wall painting commissions in older buildings with poor plaster conditions led to the

⁶⁷ Hannes Meyer, “My Dismissal from the Bauhaus 1930,” in *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings*, ed. Claude Schnaidt and Arthur Niggli, trans. D.Q Stephenson (Teufen: Arthur Niggli, 1965), 103.

⁶⁸ Hannes Meyer, “My Expulsion from the Bauhaus An Open Letter to Lord Mayor Hesse of Dessau” (1930), in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1976), 164.

⁶⁹ Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 91.

need for wallpaper.⁷⁰ In 1955, Hinnerk Scheper wrote that the start of the official wallpaper project came in 1929 when Emil Rasch, at the urging of his sister, came to the Bauhaus with a plan for a collaboration with his wallpaper company.⁷¹ Wallpaper scholar Thümmeler argued that the idea of what she called the “development wallpaper,” made in simple monochrome patterns for the new mass housing, began in projects like Ernst May’s Neue Frankfurt even before the Bauhaus designs were created.⁷² Seeing success of these other “development wallpapers,” Emil Rasch approached Meyer in order to create an incarnation of this type for his company. Hinnerk Scheper and Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp’s intermediary role, as a friend of Maria, is absent from Thümmeler’s account and in Werner Möller’s contribution to the extensive text *Bauhaustapete*, Rasch, not Scheper, is given full credit for the idea.⁷³

Maria Rasch, who is briefly mentioned in these accounts, was the unknown but perhaps most important reason for the wallpaper’s origination at the Bauhaus. Maria, the daughter of the wealthy Rasch family and founders of the wallpaper company, started her art education at an early age, studying at the Art Academy in Breslau and the Weimar Academy of Fine Arts before joining the newly established Bauhaus in 1919. In 1923, she passed her journeyman’s examination in wall painting under the guidance of newly hired Master of Craft Bebernis.⁷⁴ She continued to work for Gropius and for associated colleagues for a few years before returning to her native town of Osnabrück in 1927.⁷⁵ Rasch was a good friend of Hinnerk Scheper and Lou

⁷⁰ Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper*, 51.

⁷¹ Hinnerk Scheper, “Wie die Bauhaus Tapete entstand,” Sonderbeilage Werkbericht, *Werk und Zeit* 4, no. 2 (1955).

⁷² Thümmeler, “Architecture Versus Wallpaper,” 14. Hans Leistikow was the designer of the Frankfurt wallpapers.

⁷³ Möller, “No Risk, No Gain.”

⁷⁴ Ronny Schüler, “Die Werkstatt für Wandmalerei,” in *Die Handwerksmeister am Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar* (Weimar: Bauhaus University Press, 2013), 91.

⁷⁵ Borchers, *Maria Rasch: Eine Osnabrücker Malerin, 1897–1959*.

Scheper-Berkenkamp. Some of the letters between them survive in the Scheper Archive, including a colorful illustrated letter from 1928 from Scheper-Berkenkamp to Rasch. Rasch's background as a wall painter and her friendship with the Schepers positioned her as key to the association between Rasch and Company and the Bauhaus. It was her relationships that may have brought these two institutions together.⁷⁶

Overall, the roots of all these origin myths are probably true. Scheper did discuss a wallpaper idea with Maria Rasch early on, there were contemporary “development wallpapers,” and Emil Rasch wanted his own version. The drive to claim or assign credit for the idea of Bauhaus wallpaper is a consequence of scholars disregarding the wallpaper designs themselves. The innovation was in the idea to create Bauhaus wallpaper. The success, according to this model, was due to its advertising, Bauhaus brand-name, and the persistence of Emil Rasch. Perhaps, however, the success was also due to the actual designs and colors of the wallpapers. Following the establishment of the concept, Emil Rasch approached the Bauhaus, perhaps through Scheper's arrangement,⁷⁷ and met with Meyer in January 1929. According to a report from Rasch employee Joachim Meilchen, Meyer was at first reserved about the idea of wallpaper and was finally convinced only due to Rasch's persuasive argument.⁷⁸ This account of the interaction seems much like Rasch company and family lore—the talented Emil Rasch was able to convince the often criticized and negatively viewed Bauhaus director of the idea of Bauhaus wallpaper. It appears unlikely, after reviewing Meyer's writings on color and architecture, that he would have been aggressively opposed to the idea. In fact, he was so quickly on board, appearing

⁷⁶ Her exact role is unknown and further research is needed to discover more about Rasch in order to really get to the core of her input.

⁷⁷ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 136.

⁷⁸ Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 91.

to need almost no convincing at all that a contract was negotiated and signed in a few months, by March 1929.

The terms of the contract are outlined in a draft printed in *Bauhaustapete*,⁷⁹ which references a series of meetings and letters that hammered out the details of the deal between the Hannover based Rasch and Company and the Bauhaus Dessau. The two entities agreed to produce a wallpaper and pattern collection under the name “Bauhaus Dessau” and the school committed to develop twelve wallpaper designs for the first collection in 1929. The school would also monitor the coloration of the paper in the factory and use at least five colors in each pattern. In return, Rasch would pay the Bauhaus 150 reichsmarks for each design and 8% of the revenue, which consisted of the total sales minus 20% set aside for Rasch. The supervision of the coloration of the paper at the factory required travel by the Bauhaus staff and students; Rasch agreed to reimburse these expenses and provide a per diem allowance of 30 reichsmarks for teachers and 20 reichsmarks for students. The Bauhaus agreed to not develop competing wallpapers under the name “Bauhaus Dessau;” Rasch agreed to consult the Bauhaus on the use of its name and allowed the Bauhaus full access and supervision of the fabrication. The deal was meant to be advantageous for both parties: the Bauhaus agreed to use the wallpaper whenever possible in its buildings and Rasch agreed to buy advertisements in the Bauhaus magazine. There were a number of provisions for how and when accounts and payments were to be made—every quarter—and the Bauhaus had the right to review the books. The agreement ended on December 31, 1930, with the possibility of extension, while Rasch reserved the right to reject patterns as unprintable or not financially viable. Provisions were added for arbitration and legal resolution should there be disagreements or disputes.

⁷⁹ Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete*, 23.

Work on wallpaper patterns seems to have begun almost immediately after the signing of the contract. A design competition open for all Bauhaus students began the process, but the design and production of the wallpaper was primarily left to the wall painting workshop. A committee of Bauhaus masters, Hinnerk Scheper, Josef Albers, Ludwig Hilberseimer, and Joost Schmidt, would select the winning designs. At first, there was no consensus on what Bauhaus wallpaper would look like, but as Scheper later argued, “The Bauhaus wallpaper came into existence from the aversion of the Bauhaus to wallpaper.”⁸⁰ All seemed united by the fact that Bauhaus wallpaper would not look like traditional patterned and figurative wallpapers. Scheper, as mentioned above, is given much of the credit for this project, and his writing about it in 1955 provide some insight into its development.⁸¹ For Scheper, the wallpaper should act like paint, but it should not be a plain color or busy ornament, imitating other materials. When considering Scheper’s account of the wallpaper one should use caution, however. Although he was certainly involved, he was not the only member of the selection committee, and he left the Bauhaus by summer 1929, just as the wallpaper project was coming to fruition. Other faculty took on important leadership roles. Hannes Meyer and Josef Albers were intimately involved in the selections of the designs.⁸² Like much at the Bauhaus, as per the founding manifesto, the project was a group effort.

At the beginning of the design process, Scheper wrote that Rasch expected abstract ornamental designs, like a Klee or Kandinsky painting.⁸³ Many of the students began with more figurative designs, including “fish, birds, flowers, geometrical designs, people composed of

⁸⁰ “Um es in einem Satz zu sagen: Die Bauhaus-Tapete entstand aus der Abneigung des Bauhaus gegen Tapeten.” Scheper, “Wie die Bauhaus Tapete entstand.”

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Albers donated one of the large wallpaper books to the Harvard Art Museum in 1956.

⁸³ Scheper, “Wie die Bauhaus Tapete entstand.”

triangles and circles.”⁸⁴ Students like Fischli, Dearstyne, and Fischer experimented with many different designs. Dearstyne epitomized the overall process in his experience. “I went about carving some more-or-less abstract shapes in pieces of linoleum and making prints from these in various colors.” He added “I was enthusiastic about my designs until Hannes Meyer... examined them and remarked sarcastically that they look like something an American might be expected to do.”⁸⁵ These typical designs of wallpaper—the pictorial patterns and representational imagery—were quickly rejected. As Fischli later stressed, art had no place in the design of the wallpaper.⁸⁶

A huge collection of samples and drafts for wallpaper designs by the young student Hermann Fischer, now held by the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin, display a large range of approaches to designing wallpaper from patterns that resemble geometric-abstract paintings to those that evoke subtle textures. His wide variety of designs also hint at the time and effort that these young students devoted to this project. Fischer enrolled at the Bauhaus in the 1928–1929 winter semester and he joined the wall painting workshop on March 25, 1929, just as the wallpaper project was mounting.⁸⁷ Over the next few years at the Bauhaus and later as a privately contracted wallpaper designer, he created countless wallpaper designs. These included a dizzying array of different options, many with speckles and dots, rubbings over rough surfaces, vertical zigzags, and clusters of dots (figure 4.18–4.20). Figurative designs—for example, overlapping stars in pink and gray; multi-colored squares; and dark and bold tartan-like patterns of blue, pink, and dark gray—were among his creations (figure 4.22). He repeated some of the more promising

⁸⁴ Hans Fischli, *Hans Fischli: Malerei, Plastik, Architektur*, (Zurich: Kunsthaus, 1968), 76, quoted in Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 92.

⁸⁵ Dearstyne, *Inside the Bauhaus*, 150.

⁸⁶ Fischli, *Hans Fischli als Maler and Zeichner*, 47.

⁸⁷ Hannes Meyer to Hermann Fischer, October 19, 1928, Hermann Fischer Papers, Mappe 6, 8518-1, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin; Hannes Meyer to Hermann Fischer, March 25, 1929, Mappe 6, 8518-2, Hermann Fischer Papers Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin.

in many color combinations (figure 4.21). Two of his designs were selected for the first collection in 1929.⁸⁸

Fierce competition among the students increased as the direction of the wallpaper project became clearer. No one was happy with figurative patterns of birds and fish, and the abstracted and restrained patterns began to win out. Dearstyne, after Meyer criticized him for his early attempts, recounted having a revelation a few days later:

I happened to turn one of these pieces of linoleum over and discovered that the fiber network of the burlap backing formed a satisfying texture. I pointed this out to a fellow student, saying that it might make a suitable wallpaper pattern. Taking this cue, he made an impression from the back of the piece of linoleum and turned it in as his idea. Subsequently, this became one of the designs in the Bauhaus wallpaper line.⁸⁹

For the students, a successful wallpaper design would result in a level of financial success.

Fischli noted that he and Margaret Leiteritz felt rich with the money earned. Leiteritz, Fischer, and others would work in the wallpaper industry for years to come.⁹⁰

Scheper stated in 1955 that the goal of the wallpaper was to recreate the effects of paint on plaster, using the skills of the wall painter. Fischli described using the techniques of his wall painting education when making designs; “I took paper, mixed color pastes, applied them, waited for what I thought was the right state of dryness and combed the still moist surface with my scraper.” He continued making these textured surfaces. “I soon became more inventive and put on layers of different colors, running the scraper over the whole thing in crisscrossing or undulating movements.”⁹¹ The resulting designs, especially those selected for manufacture, were more than just a replication of the effects of paint on the wall, they were distinct and noticeable

⁸⁸ Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 92.

⁸⁹ Dearstyne, *Inside the Bauhaus*, 92.

⁹⁰ Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 97.

⁹¹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 91–92.

patterns. These wallpapers were not monochrome in the pure sense of the term, because they included different shades of a single color, complicating and at times accentuating the distinct patterns.

Introducing Bauhaus Wallpaper

The original Bauhaus collection offered fourteen different patterns in many different colors. Almost all the designers for the first collection, which was finished in fall 1929 and put on the market in 1930, have been identified. According to Fischli, six of the selected designs for the first 1930 collection were by him and four by Leiteritz.⁹² Two are believed to be Fischer's.⁹³ Today what remains of the original Bauhaus wallpaper designs are small sample books organized by the different patterns. The books for the 1930 and 1931 collections of Bauhaus wallpaper, in addition to including small samples of every pattern in each available color, also opened with a title page and description of the new product (figure 4.23). The text acknowledged the shortfalls of paint and why a new building interior looked terrible shortly after it was painted. It declared, "Wallpapers are better than paint" because they protect the walls, and it emphasized three aspects of the wallpaper: "smooth surface," "hard wearing," and "cheap."⁹⁴ All three of these factors are unaesthetic, they had little to do with appearance and more to do with function, material and cost.

Having established the superiority of wallpaper over paint, the text further argued that Bauhaus wallpaper was the best option on the market for the following reasons. First, the Bauhaus helped with the decision making process and developed designs in common color

⁹² Fischli, *Hans Fischli als Maler und Zeichner*; Lindemann, *Die Bauhaus Künstlerin Margaret Leiteritz*.

⁹³ Scheper, "Wall-Painting and Wallpaper," 92.

⁹⁴ "Tapeten sind besser als Anstrich...glatte Oberfläche...unempfindlich...billig," *Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book*, 1930, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin.

ranges. Second, the patterns disguised dirt. Third, they were economical to install with little waste. Fourth, the Bauhaus wallpapers were “modern, [and] unobtrusive,”⁹⁵ and therefore would not clash with existing décor. Fifth, the lighter and more durable papers were better than the monochrome wallpapers currently on the market. Sixth, their affordability was re-emphasized. Lastly, the text proclaimed that Bauhaus wallpapers were made “of the **best materials**, strong paper and lightfast colors.”⁹⁶ On the next page of the sample book, below a photograph of the Dessau Bauhaus building, the caption proudly stated, “The Bauhaus in Dessau attends to the design and coloration of Bauhaus wallpaper” (figure 4.24).⁹⁷ The Dessau Bauhaus was directly responsible for this product. The wallpaper was not in the style of the Bauhaus or just an associated product, but it was a direct result of the school. The general message of the text in the sample book concluded that the Bauhaus wallpapers were different than the other monochrome wallpapers on the market: they were more durable and cheap, and came with a Bauhaus aesthetic.

The first fourteen designs in the 1930 sample book, labeled *b1-b14*, included many versions of lines: horizontal and vertical; straight, broken, and wavy; and grids. Each pattern used two to three different shades of the same color, always a medium shade with a very light highlight and/or a darker low light (figure 4.25). Pattern *b1* was Herman Fischer’s design. His mock-ups of the different color combinations for this simple horizontal striped design, in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin, generally reflect the actual manufactured colors (figure 4.21). This pattern, which was produced in fourteen different colors, was included in both the 1930 and 1931

⁹⁵ “modern, unaufdringlich,”

⁹⁶ “Bauhaustapeten sind aus *bestem Material*, starkem Papier, lichtechten Farben.” Emphasis in the original. *Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book*.

⁹⁷ “Das Bauhaus in Dessau besorgte Entwurf und Fargebung der Bauhaustapeten.”

collections. One color was eliminated in 1931.⁹⁸ In a large sample book, donated to the Harvard Art Museum collection in 1952 by Josef Albers, this same pattern was produced with twelve different colors—two different shades of beige, a darker taupe, two light browns, light blue, two shades of teal, two yellows, burnt orange, and rich red (figure 4.26). The first five are neutrals, but the last seven are saturated, rich and bright colors.

In design *b1*, the dark and light horizontal lines of three different shades of a given color create a vibrating effect. The strength and power of this optical movement depends on the color. The richer, more saturated colors—red, teals, and the darker taupe—yield higher contrasts of light and dark making the pattern more noticeable and bold, and giving the illusion of texture, of ridges (figures 4.27–4.28). The heightened contrast and increased visual effect created by the richer colors is also true of the other designs. Despite the optical effect of a textured surface, the paper in these early patterns is actually flat and rather thin. Later designs, however, often included a texture embossed into the paper's surface. Another notable design from this first collection is *b4*, the only design included in all the collections, in which the Bauhaus was directly involved, from 1930-34 (figure 4.29).⁹⁹ The design consists of a loose, broken grid. The background is made up of light and middle shades of a color, creating a vacillating surface, over which thin, irregular vertical and horizontal lines in a darker shade cross and intersect. When compared to the strict horizontals of *b1* or some of the other more regular and geometric patterns of the first collection, *b4* appears more organic because of its roughness and irregularity.

In contrast to the longevity of *b4*, *b13* was included in the first collection only; it was eliminated by the 1931 collection and is not included in the large sample book at Harvard (figure

⁹⁸ These statistics are all found in Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete*, 111. Verification of these different statistics and the makeup of the collections requires further archival research.

⁹⁹ The student designer of this pattern is unknown.

4.30). Like many of the patterns, *b13* is based on a grid of wavy horizontal and vertical lines, undulating with regular spacing and rhythm across the paper. It has a distinct off-white background with dark colored lines over the top. In the 1930 sample book in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin, the effect of the pattern is bold and optically demanding. Like an Op Art painting from the 1960s, this pulsating optical effect is challenging for the eye and may be the reason for its elimination from the collection. Or perhaps it was discontinued because the design was redundant—it is very similar to two other patterns from 1930, *b6* and *b14*, which also have subtle wavy grids.

As the collections progressed from year to year, some patterns were kept and others were discontinued. In addition, new designs were continually developed. Some patterns, *b4* for example, were continually adjusted, with certain colors dropped and more added on; by 1932, the color K—bright red—was no longer included. The reasons for these changes remains a mystery, although it seems obvious that the selection committee at the Bauhaus probably consulted the sales numbers to determine which patterns were selling and which were not. For the second collection, in the 193, two original patterns were removed, *b2* and *b13*, and *b15* through *b25* were added. These additions increased the total number of patterns to 23, equating to 249 different wallpapers. As the collections continued, fewer and fewer of the original designs remained and more new designs were added.

In addition to the standard wallpaper collections, which were called the blue cards or blue sample books, the yellow collection was also being developed. This collection, which was on the market by 1931 and ran for three years, used an oil printing process. As the 1932 Bauhaus yellow book states in its introductory passage, the success of the blue book, created with a glue printing process, led to the production of oil-printed papers (figure 4.32), which were smudge

and waterproof. The colors, however, tended to fade, and all the surviving copies of these sample books have aged significantly. In the successive collections, the patterns tended to become bolder but less geometric. The colors were toned down, and the later patterns were rougher and embossed: for example textured *b17*, introduced in the 1931 collection (figure 4.33). The vertical stripes of the pattern are embossed with a grid, moving the patterns away from a purely optical surface exercise as they become literally textured. Unfortunately, it is difficult today to assess the overall evolution of the collections due to the dearth of extant samples in the United States or even in the Bauhaus Archiv in Berlin.¹⁰⁰

The students and teachers involved in the wallpaper project, as was characteristic for the Bauhaus, had a distinct interest in craft: technique, production, and materials. The texts included in the sample books explained vehemently that this product was made of the best materials, and this claim is supported by comments from Bauhaus wallpaper designers. Dearstyne recalled going to a local Dessau wallpaper factory with Albers in order to understand the production process.¹⁰¹ Scheper recalled that there was resistance from some of the technicians in the Rasch wallpaper factory about how the Bauhaus insisted the wallpapers were to be made.¹⁰² The Bauhaus required a certain quality and pushed the wallpaper manufacturer to adjust to its standards.¹⁰³ The yellow collection, for example, was one of the first attempts to use an oil printing process, which would produce more durable and washable wallpaper. Le Corbusier had just developed his own line of durable oil-printed papers with the Swiss wallpaper company Salubra (figure 4.34). For the Bauhaus, the production of wallpaper was not limited to just

¹⁰⁰ In order to get a more complete sense one must visit Rasch and Company to look at all the sample books together, a visit that I was not able to accomplish for this dissertation.

¹⁰¹ Dearstyne, *Inside the Bauhaus*, 149–50.

¹⁰² Scheper, “Wie Die Bauhaus Tapete Entstand.”

¹⁰³ Scheper, “Wall-Painting and Wallpaper,” 93.

designing the patterns and selecting colors. The students and teachers were also involved in the production process, visiting the factory and closely supervising the color. This was the kind of integration and interaction with industry that Gropius declared in 1926, “The Bauhaus wants to train a new kind of collaborator for industry and the crafts, who has an equal command of both technology and form.” He continued:

To reach the objective of creating a set of standard prototypes which meet all the demands of economy, technology and form, requires the selection of the best, most versatile, and thoroughly educated men who are well grounded in workshop experience and who are imbued with an exact knowledge of the design elements of form and mechanics and their underlying laws.¹⁰⁴

Bauhaus and Le Corbusier Wallpapers

The Bauhaus’ collaboration with Rasch was not the only unification of the modernist art and architecture community with the wallpaper industry. Le Corbusier’s contemporaneously designed wallpapers are discussed in Rüegg’s text *Polychromie Architecturale: Le Corbusier’s Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959*, in which Rüegg explained and analyzed Le Corbusier’s color theory, the development of the architect’s distinct Purist color palette, and its use in his architecture.¹⁰⁵ He also thoroughly discussed the two lines of wallpaper Le Corbusier developed in 1931 and 1959 in collaboration with the Swiss wallpaper firm Salubra. Rüegg made comparisons to Bruno Taut and de Stijl, as both an explanation of Le Corbusier’s use of color and as a point of comparison, but he did not discuss the Bauhaus, the wall painting workshop, or Bauhaus wallpaper. This omission, due perhaps either to the dearth of awareness of the Bauhaus examples or a purposeful ignorance, needs to be corrected, because both the Bauhaus and Le

¹⁰⁴ Walter Gropius, “Bauhaus Dessau-Principles of Bauhaus Production” (1926), in *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, ed. Hans Maria Wingler and Joseph Stein, trans. Basil Gilbert and Wolfgang Jabs (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1976), 110.

¹⁰⁵ Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale*.

Corbusier, canonical and powerful forces in modernist architecture, created a product—wallpaper—that is often thought to be anathema to modernism. Both the institution and the man are commonly believed to have designed white buildings, when in fact they used color extensively. Their wallpapers were in some respects very similar but differed in meaningful ways.

Le Corbusier's wallpapers were developed about a year after the Bauhaus's. The architect signed a contract with Salubra, based in Basel, Switzerland, in 1930 and the wallpaper line was released in fall 1931.¹⁰⁶ The wallpapers were primarily monochrome, comprising of forty-three flat, solid and uniform colors with no pattern or design, compared to the distinctly patterned and optically interesting Bauhaus wallpapers (figure 4.34).¹⁰⁷ The differences are important, as the patterns of the Bauhaus wallpaper and the flatness of the Le Corbusier's corresponded to how they differed on the philosophy and treatment of the wall surface. The wall painting workshop at the Bauhaus focused on using painting techniques to create variety on the surfaces and effects on the wall. While for Le Corbusier—the architect—the total building and the architectonics of the room were primarily of interest, and colors on the wall were thought to be dangerous. In a Le Corbusier interior, a surface pattern or texture would distract from the sculptural effects of space. Le Corbusier was interested in the color and not the craft of producing it or the surface qualities.

In the introductory text for his collection Le Corbusier explained, “Salubra is oil paint sold in rolls.” These wallpapers were a way to manufacture and standardize paint and paint colors. “Instead of covering walls and ceilings with ‘three coats of oils’—necessarily applied amidst the hazards and hindrance arising from other work—we can now utilize this ‘machine-

¹⁰⁶ Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale*, 51–53.

¹⁰⁷ There were also a few small dots and patterns design as accents for the solid colors.

prepared-painting.”¹⁰⁸ These were essentially the same stated goals of Scheper in 1955, who declared that the Bauhaus wallpapers were meant to recreate the effects and practice of wall painting. The relationship between paint and wallpaper was also a major claim of the Bauhaus sample book’s introductory statement, which emphasized the problems with paint, declaring the wallpapers an improvement, as did Le Corbusier. Despite these similarities in rhetoric, the two wallpaper projects developed from very different views on wall painting and color in architecture. Le Corbusier was very careful not to turn the wall into a tapestry of colors. For him, too much color could kill the volume of space and act as camouflage. Colors were completely at the service of architect and architecture, while the wall painters at the Bauhaus often used color to sculpt and activate the architecture.

Regardless of the differences between the look and approach of Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus toward the wall and wallpaper, the selling points for the products were primarily the same. Both declared the durability and the hygienic qualities of their product. The Bauhaus wallpapers hid any dirt with patterns and they used strong paper and lightfast colors. Le Corbusier’s were similarly fadeless and made on strong supple paper; in addition, they were washable. Although the claims for the wallpapers were similar, they courted different markets. While the Bauhaus repeated claims of affordability as a major element of their marketability, Le Corbusier made no mention of this, his wallpapers were not necessarily for the masses. For Le Corbusier, what was most important about the wallpapers were his choice of colors, colors he had been developing and using since the early 1920s, in projects like the Parisian Villa La Roche from 1923–1925. Rüeegg described the Purist color palette in this period, which consisted of earth

¹⁰⁸ Rüeegg, *Polychromie Architecturale*, 150.

tones and traditional color pigments.¹⁰⁹ Le Corbusier guaranteed these colors in the Salubra wallpaper, stating that no variation or inconsistencies would occur between rolls.

Fundamental to Le Corbusier's wallpaper were his color keyboards—sets of related and curated colors. Le Corbusier argued that each person has their own taste and a color palette that fits their sensitivities; he wanted to guide the consumer in their individual selection of colors and combinations with his keyboards. In the introductory text, he claimed that the consumer was liberated or free to pick his or her own “affinity” for colors, “which seems to accord with his inner feelings.”¹¹⁰ He organized his sections of forty-three colors into different palettes labeled with names like “space,” “sky,” and “sand,” which would all work together, and the user would have the freedom to select the one they preferred. Using the two cardboard screens, viewfinder-like tools included with the collection, the consumer could isolate the colors that work together within his or her chosen palette.¹¹¹ The more neutral horizontal strips across the bottom and top of the keyboards were meant to be background colors for most surfaces of a space, and the smaller samples of brighter colors in the three middle rows were for highlights and accents (figure 4.35).

With this keyboard and viewfinder, Le Corbusier controlled what colors would be placed together, guiding the user to work within one color palette and to select only the colors isolated. He explained that the colors were those that he had designated as “architectural shades,” colors that worked best in architecture and conveyed a “mural effect.”¹¹² In addition, with a hint of

¹⁰⁹ Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale: Le Corbusier's color keyboards from 1931 and 1959*.

¹¹⁰ Le Corbusier, “Colour Keyboards (1931),” in *Polychromie Architecturale*, 150–51.

¹¹¹ Although the viewfinder's purpose is to guide the consumer, in fact it is confusing and awkward to use.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 151.

mysticism Le Corbusier believed that in the selection of a certain color keyboard, “a destiny is being accomplished.”¹¹³

The Bauhaus had no such prescribed application of the wallpapers or color. Although the students of the wall painting workshop were trained in many different color theories and the in visual and psychological effects of colors, there was no succinct or universal philosophy of color at the school or in the design of the wallpaper. The user of Bauhaus wallpaper was left to make his or her own decisions regarding pattern and color, with the possibility that they would mix and match. The Bauhaus wanted to create a successful, marketable product, affordable for all; they did not prescribe or dictate too heavily to the user. Le Corbusier, on the other hand, as the sole designer, was exporting his color philosophy to a select and understanding audience. There is no evidence that Le Corbusier’s collection sold as well as the Bauhaus collections. He produced only two collections: one in 1931 and another twenty years later.¹¹⁴ I believe the openness, availability, and choice inherent in the Bauhaus collection were reasons for the Bauhaus wallpaper’s success. The designs were not aesthetically aggressive and they did not scream modernism like a tubular chair, but offered an accessible conduit into a modern world, into modern architecture as approved by the Bauhaus.

Despite the rhetoric about the Bauhaus wallpaper acting like paint in a space, the wallpaper patterns, particularly in the first two collections, were very unlike paint, especially when compared to the earlier wall painting practices of the workshop, either the designs for the Dessau-Törten housing estate or the painting of the Dessau Bauhaus building. The patterns are just that: patterns, designs, often geometric and distinct. The wallpaper could do things that wall painting could not: cover uneven or poor wall surfaces, be applied cheaply and quickly;

¹¹³ Rüegg, *Polychromie Architecturale*, 135.

¹¹⁴ Rüegg does not discuss the sales figures for the wallpaper. Ibid.

nevertheless, the nuances of wall painting were lost. The ability to mix colors in the individual spaces and hone a color palette for a particular room and use was missing with wallpaper. Using color, as Scheper did, for orientation in a building or to highlight certain structural or architectural features with a pop of bright, saturated color, although possible with wallpaper, was unlikely without providing guidance to the user. Spaces could not be pushed and pulled, transformed with colors, as Arndt had done in Jena. Control was lost and, unlike Le Corbusier, the Bauhaus was willing to lose control in favor of financial success.

Marketing Bauhaus Wallpaper

After the design and production of the wallpaper, the next important step was its marketing. The advertisements and promotional materials reveal what the market and the public wanted, but also what the school and factory were most proud of and believed was most notable about the new wallpaper. Many of the themes of the large marketing campaign for Bauhaus wallpaper were first introduced on the title pages of the sample books. In addition, alongside the production and manufacturing terms for the wallpaper designs, the contract between the Bauhaus and Rasch contained a number of provision about the so-called “Bauhaus package”—the collaboration with the Bauhaus’s advertising department. All the advertising work—posters and pattern books, printed materials and ads—would be done through the advertising department of the Bauhaus. Rasch would reinvest 5% of the revenue into Bauhaus advertising designs and, in turn, would receive a discount of 20% for designs and 10% for the execution. With these provisions, the Bauhaus established not just a project for the wall painting department and the newly formed interior design department, but also for the growing advertising department, led by Joost Schmidt. Discussing the advertisements and advertising strategy in *Bauhaustapete*, Werner

Möller emphasized that the aggressive marketing campaign was a significant cause for the wallpaper's great success.¹¹⁵

The earliest ads from fall 1929, printed in *Deutsche Tapeten-Zeitung*, the German wallpaper trade magazine, were aimed at the dealers and the professional interior designer (figure 4.36). They declared, "Make sure that you have the little blue Bauhaus wallpaper book handy, architects will soon ask you for it."¹¹⁶ These ads often featured quotations and endorsements from leading modernist architects like Richard Döcker, Otto Haesler, Hans Poelzig, and Walter Gropius, and the ads urged retailers to stock Bauhaus wallpaper and the wallpaper sample book—the so-called blue card (figure 4.37).¹¹⁷ Specific emphasis was placed on the use of the wallpaper in the many new housing settlements, such as the Dessau-Törten housing estate, where paint was inferior to and more costly than the new wallpaper (figure 4.38). A colorful ad in *Das Neue Frankfurt* journal from late 1930 hailed the affordability of the wallpaper and praised the unobtrusive pattern and common colors (figure 4.39). This insert included three examples of the new 1931 designs: tan *b21*, orange *b4* and green *b19*.

As Möller discussed, the Bauhaus advertisements from 1929 and 1930 slowly began to coalesce around a common aesthetic, with blocks of lower case text set off with black or red lines or circles. By late 1931 or 1932, the advertising work shifted away from the Bauhaus to the Hannover advertising firm Ullstein Advertising Consulting.¹¹⁸ Only a short window existed from late 1929 to the middle of 1931, during which the Bauhaus was the major instigator of the

¹¹⁵ Möller, "No Risk, No Gain."

¹¹⁶ "Achten Sie darauf, daß Sie die kleine blaue Bauhauskarte zur Hand haben, Architekten werden bald bei Ihnen danach fragen." Advertisement in *Deutsche Tapeten-Zeitung*, September 1, 1929, published in Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete*, 29.

¹¹⁷ The blue cover of the sample book distinguished it from the yellow book of the oil-based papers of the next year.

¹¹⁸ Möller, "No Risk, No Gain," 32–42.

wallpaper's marketing. The most dynamic and informative design of this period may be Schmidt's cover for the 1931 Bauhaus wallpaper advertising catalogue (figure 4.40).¹¹⁹

Schmidt's cover design unifies photography, typography, and advertising slogans to present the Bauhaus wallpapers as a modern alternative to paint on interior walls. Lying on an unwound roll of wallpaper a reflective orb reproduces a roll of pattern *b25* and a brightly lit and spacious room. The space is Schmidt's studio in his Master's House in Dessau, with its large bank of windows on the right and a plant in the center, hiding the camera. Undulating with the unwinding roll the slogan, "der **bauhaustapete** gehört die zukunft" (the future belongs to **Bauhaus** wallpaper) is printed in simplified Bauhaus lowercase type.¹²⁰ In the orb, a popular visual device of the Bauhaus, we look into the future and into a modern room, which is ostensibly finished with this very Bauhaus wallpaper. On the right, orange text states, "so urteilen: FACH-PRESSE, TAGESPRESSE, ARCHITEKTEN" (So deems: specialist press, popular press, architects). Again, as in the earlier 1929 and 1930 advertisements, endorsements were emphasized. The overall image is dynamic. It creates a sense of movement with the undulating roll, a sense of space and depth using the reflectivity of the orb, and graphically expresses the hanging of the paper, replicating the process of applying the paper to the walls.

Schmidt, the cover's designer, is not a well known member of the Bauhaus faculty, although he was master of both the advertising and the sculpture workshops.¹²¹ He began at the

¹¹⁹ This pamphlet was twenty pages long, and included nine samples of Bauhaus wallpaper. Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete*, 33.

¹²⁰ Emphasis using a bold font is used in the original image. Joost Schmidt, cover page for *Der Bauhaus Tapete gehört die Zukunft* (The Future Belongs to Bauhaus Wallpaper), letterpress on paper, 1931, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin.

¹²¹ Before World War I, Schmidt studied art at the Grand Ducal Saxon Academy of Art in Weimar. After the war, he was attracted by Gropius's manifesto and he joined as an apprentice in the sculpture workshop. His early work includes woodcarvings on the walls, doors and stairwell at the Haus Sommerfeld in 1921.

Bauhaus as a student in 1919 and advanced quickly from apprentice to journeyman. He was one of the few students to become a master, when he became the leader of the advertising workshop in 1928. In his work he often integrated typography and advertising design with photography and sculpture.¹²² The reflective orb was a common trope in his designs. The orb was part of Schmidt's studio space and was integrated into a number of his projects. The reflective orb was also a popular trope for others' photography at the Bauhaus. It is most prominent in self-portraits, including those of Marianne Brandt and Florence Henri. Henri used the reflective balls as Rosalind Krauss described, "...to mark the seam in the photograph's field between reality and illusion." Krauss argued that the spheres are emblems of "abstract, formal purity."¹²³ In Marianne Brandt's self-portrait or Walter Funkat's Glass spheres, the orb also creates a picture within a picture, focusing the viewer's attention on the medium of photography and its ability to reflect the world around us. These examples, along with Schmidt's work, makes clear that this visual device was a Bauhäusler leitmotif.¹²⁴

In his early studies for the catalogue cover, Schmidt used this photographic device to unify the disparate elements of the design (figure 4.41). The roll of wallpaper and the slogan, "the future belongs to Bauhaus wallpaper," which is readable in the reflection, show the result of the wallpaper in the studio space.¹²⁵ Within the orb, the camera was smudged away using the tricks of the darkroom and a mockup of the text runs across the top and side. In these early designs and in the final cover, the central device—the orb—creates a connection to the Bauhaus

¹²² Rainer Wick, *Teaching at the Bauhaus*, trans. Stephen Mason (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 286–300.

¹²³ Rosalind Krauss, "Jump over the Bauhaus," *October*, no. 15 (December 1, 1980): 106.

¹²⁴ Moholy-Nagy also used a reflective orb photograph in his *Painting, Photography and Film* (1925).

¹²⁵ The initial photograph includes a cluttered background, the backwards printed text, and the camera in the orb. The second design has eliminated those distracting elements, leaving the wallpaper roll and the orb on a black background.

as a community. It is a Bauhaus photographic device in a design created at the Bauhaus by a long-time member of the faculty, for one of the few realizations of a Bauhaus product for a mass audience. The wallpaper project was just the kind of product the Bauhaus community dreamed of: designed in the school with the coordination of the different workshops for a single goal, just like the Gothic cathedral of Feininger's manifesto print.

The 1931 advertising booklet also included statements about the use of Bauhaus wallpaper in the newly constructed large housing estates in Germany, and commented that two-thirds of the interiors at the 1931 German Building Exhibition used Bauhaus wallpaper. This reference to the large and important exhibition was imperative to the marketing of the wallpaper as a viable and forward-looking building material. The organizer of the exhibition was Mies van der Rohe, who was appointed director of the Bauhaus in late summer 1930. As Wallis Miller argued, the three-month exhibition demonstrated not just the current state of the German building and architecture industry but also its future.¹²⁶ In the "The Dwelling of Our Time," section of the official guide, Mies declared that "one will not see the dwelling of yesterday, but that of tomorrow."¹²⁷ The future, as Schmidt's wallpaper catalogue cover proclaims, belongs to the Bauhaus wallpaper.

The marketing in many different magazines and professional journals, the endorsements of prominent architects, the innovative visual advertisements, and the display of Bauhaus wallpaper in exhibitions like the 1931 German Building Exhibition and the traveling Bauhaus exhibition, along with other well-designed product, all contributed to good sales for the wallpaper. In late 1929 and early 1930, sales started off slowly, but by the end of 1930 the

¹²⁶ Wallis Jo Miller, "Tangible Ideas: Architecture and the Public at the 1931 German Building Exhibition in Berlin" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1999), 101.

¹²⁷ Mies van der Rohe, *Program 1931*, quoted in Miller, "Tangible Ideas," 101.

business was up 300% from the beginning of the year. In the first year, four retailers bought the Bauhaus collection, resulting in 550 sample books and by 1931 there were 6,944 both blue and yellow collections at various retailers all over Germany.¹²⁸ The wallpaper was popular for large housing estates, used at Gropius's Dammerstock housing estate in Karlsruhe by September 1930 and Otto Haesler's Rothenberg housing estate near Kassel.¹²⁹ When Meyer was dismissed from the Bauhaus in summer 1930 he was able to declare in his open letter to Dessau Mayor Hesse, "Within one year, 4,000 homes had been lined with Bauhaus wallpaper."¹³⁰

The End of the Bauhaus and Continuation of Bauhaus Wallpaper

For the embattled school's overall financial stability and solvency the wallpaper project provided a major lifeline and the main source of revenue. As is well known, Meyer's directorship ended rather eventfully and the ordeal left the Bauhaus with a politically problematic reputation. During his leadership, the negative and hostile reactions to the school in Dessau grew and the school was increasingly viewed as a haven for communists and radicals, a perception traced back to its founding. In September 1930, Mies took over as director of the Bauhaus, inheriting the now successful wallpaper project. The agreement between Rasch and the Bauhaus was continued under Mies, and modified slightly by a slight reduction in the payment to the Bauhaus, from 8% to 5% of the profits. This resulted though in higher profits for the Bauhaus because of continuing increases in sales.¹³¹

Political pressure forced the Dessau school to close in 1932 and move briefly to Berlin before it closed for good on July 20, 1933. Möller described the process, by which Emil Rasch

¹²⁸ Kieselbach, *Bauhaustapete*, 114.

¹²⁹ Scheper, "Wall-Painting and Wallpaper," 94.

¹³⁰ Meyer, "My Expulsion from the Bauhaus An Open Letter to Lord Mayor Hesse of Dessau," 164.

¹³¹ Möller, "No Risk, No Gain."

was able to insulate and maintain Bauhaus wallpaper as a product after the closure of the school and during the Third Reich.¹³² The first step was the transfer of the rights and termination of the contract between the Bauhaus and Rasch on April 27, 1933, shortly after the new Bauhaus in Berlin was searched by the secret police. For the Berlin Bauhaus, profits from the wallpaper project contributed to a substantial part of the school's operating budget, and with the ending of the Rasch contract, the school's financial viability was tenuous. The termination agreement included a one-time payout to the Bauhaus of 6,000 reichsmarks, which ended the school's rights to the name and the designs. Rasch agreed in a private deal with Mies to continue paying him a small percentage for some time after that.¹³³

Emil Rasch and the wallpaper company were trying to navigate the changing political atmosphere of the Third Reich and worked hard to keep the Bauhaus wallpaper brand viable. The Bauhaus wallpaper became just one of many sub-collections within the Rasch portfolio; the May line of traditional floral patterns designed by Maria May and Hilde Richter-Laskawy was added in 1932, and the Weimar collection designed by the Nazi Paul Schultze-Naumburg was included in 1934.¹³⁴ Rasch also used new advertising campaigns to alter the perception of the name Bauhaus. All these efforts worked and the Bauhaus wallpaper brand survived, although the product was not of the same quality and aesthetic. In the 1950s, Bauhaus wallpaper was revitalized with new designs by Hinnerk Scheper and was manufactured for decades primarily because it was able to maintain the Bauhaus name.

As the Bauhaus wallpaper excelled in 1930 and 1931, the wall painting workshop effectually ended, having been absorbed into the interior design department. In July 1929, Arndt

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

began as the leader of this new workshop. When Scheper returned from Moscow in summer 1930, a full-time position was no longer available and he became a part-time instructor, teaching mainly color courses. In 1930, Mies reorganized the workshops and established new statutes, clearing the school of apparent “radicals” and many of Meyer’s closest students. In the new constitution of the school, architecture took a more central role and students no longer needed to first study in a workshop before joining the architecture department. In Mies’s first curriculum of September 1930, wall painting was listed as one area of practical work within the building and interior design department.¹³⁵ By 1931, Scheper and Arndt both taught courses on topics only tangentially associated with wall painting, Scheper focused on color while Arndt taught courses on perspective and oversaw the entire interior design department.¹³⁶ Mies was enthusiastic for his architecture students to learn color theory and the effects of color in architecture, but wall painting as a separate and vibrant workshop ended, as did most of the other workshops.

Lilly Reich was appointed the head of the interior design department on January 5, 1932, and by summer 1932 Arndt departed from the Bauhaus for good. With Reich, a very accomplished designer and Mies’s longtime partner, the focus on the wall surface within the purview of the interior design department had the potential to go in a new direction. Reich was not interested or well-versed in wall painting. She instead employed textiles and objects extensively in her designs and in her section of the 1931 German Building Exhibition, known as the “Material Show.”¹³⁷ Reich and Mies approached the wall not as a surface to be painted or wallpapered, but instead they often used precious and beautiful materials such as onyx,

¹³⁵ Droste, *Bauhaus, 1919-1933*, 208.

¹³⁶ Scheper, *Colourful!*, 36–38.

¹³⁷ Matilda McQuaid, *Lilly Reich: Designer and Architect* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996); Esther da Costa Meyer, “Cruel Metonymies: Lilly Reich’s Designs for the 1937 World’s Fair,” *New German Critique*, no. 76 (January 1, 1999): 166.

expensive veneers, or textiles to shape their spaces, as Marianne Egger has discussed.¹³⁸ The potential for this new direction in wall design never materialized, however because of the growing political tensions and the Nazis' seizure of power in 1933.

The wallpaper project kept the focus of the wall painting workshop on the important wall surface, but also took art out of the equation. The skill and nuance of crafting a hand painted wall or of designing and sculpting an architectural space with color, like the wall painting projects of just a few years earlier, were discarded in favor of the factory made product. In 1940 Hannes Meyer praised the wallpapers for finally dealing with the problem of "color in the interior."¹³⁹ The wallpaper patterns, although distinct, were neutral enough to not significantly change the architectonics of the space; the ability of color to transform a space was partially neutralized. With the development of Bauhaus wallpaper, the consumer was given control over their individual spaces, removing both the architect and the wall painter from the equation. With the final shift to a product, the subtle effects used by the Bauhaus wall painting workshop in projects such as the Dessau-Törten housing estate, applying color to accentuate or change architectural space ceased. Perhaps the wallpaper's very success was due not to having an outrageously new design but because it was something the public actually wanted, truly filling a need. The wallpaper may not have been the first of its kind, but the Bauhaus went to considerable care to design a well-made product and develop an alternative conduit for applying color to architecture.

¹³⁸ Marianne Egger, "Divide and Conquer: Ludwig Mies van Der Rohe and Lilly Reich's Fabric Partitions at the Tugendhat House," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 16, no. 2 (January 1, 2009): 66–90.

¹³⁹ Hannes Meyer, "My Experience of a Polytechnical Education in Edificación" (1940), in *Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften. Buildings, Projects, and Writings*, ed. Claude Schnaidt (Teufen: Arthur Niggli, 1965), 111.

Conclusion

As this dissertation demonstrates wall painting at the Bauhaus was never simple to define. The early years were disorderly; the wall painting workshop lacked consistent leadership and the projects, often criticized, were regularly painted over. By 1923 under Kandinsky's leadership, Bauhaus wall painters were experimenting with different techniques, mediums and theories of painting walls. Some created pictorial works with abstract and figural compositions, while others developed wall color schemes, integrating color into architecture. As a result of these experiments especially those under Hinnerk Scheper, by the time the Bauhaus moved to Dessau in 1925 the workshop had shifted from creating art on the walls to painting buildings with wall color schemes. The wall painters debated whether painting and color should support the architecture or transform it as they faced problems with painting itself as a labor intensive, expensive, and imperfect technique to cover wall surfaces. Tensions also surfaced between the wall painter and architect, particularly between Gropius and various members of the workshop. Some of these problems were resolved with the workshop's development of Bauhaus wallpaper, a mass-produced wall color. While the Bauhaus wall painting workshop officially closed with the school in 1933, the issue of color's role in connection with architecture continued. Indeed the legacy of Bauhaus wall painting has yet to be discussed. For example, how was Bauhaus wallpaper accepted and used in Nazi Germany? Besides the wallpaper, how did the wall painters apply their theories, techniques, and skills after the Bauhaus closed? Did the theories of wall painting developed by members of the wall painting workshop endure? How was color used in later large housing estates? Did the legacy of wall painting live on in the Bauhaus's institutional progeny? The following comments address some of these questions, while others will need further research and study.

The lives and works of individual members of the workshop provide some insights as to what happened to wall painting after 1933. Arndt and Scheper, for example, both stayed in Germany after the closure of the school and had to adapt to Nazi policies. Scheper worked in Berlin as a wall painter and color designer, and created figurative wall paintings for many new train stations around the city, among other projects. He used his skills to restore historical wall paintings and in the postwar period he conserved and repaired war-damaged buildings.¹ Arndt, having never joined the Bauhaus in Berlin, moved back to Probstzella, Germany in 1933, where he had lived and worked intermittently. He struggled to survive and worked as a commercial designer, Nazi propagandist and architect. In the postwar years, Arndt fled from east to west, settling in Darmstadt and his painting career was limited to easel painting.² After the 1922 Jury-Free Art Exhibition, Kandinsky's only other chance to integrate his painting into architecture was at the 1931 German Building Exhibition where his designs for a music room were executed in ceramics.³ He died in 1944 in Paris without further experiments with wall painting. The biographies and post-Bauhaus oeuvres of many other wall painters like Rudolf Paris, Heinrich Koch, and Fritz Kuhr are unknown and provide little additional insight.

Herbert Bayer was the only Bauhaus wall painter to move to the United States, where many other well-known Bauhäusler fled in the 1930s and where the school's legacy was deeply felt. In the US Bayer's became well known for his graphic arts and easel painting. His abstract undulating wave-like wall painting *Verdure* in Gropius's Harkness Commons at Harvard

¹ Renate Scheper, *Hinnerk Scheper: Farbgestalter, Fotograf, Denkmalpfleger: vom Bauhaus geprägt* (Bramsche: Rasch, 2007).

² Christian Wolsdorff, "In der höchsten Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt," in *In der Vollendung liegt die Schönheit: Der Bauhaus-Meister Alfred Arndt, 1898-1976* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1999), 7–13.

³ Jill Lloyd, "Vasily Kandinsky: from Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910–1925," in *Vasily Kandinsky: From Blaue Reiter to the Bauhaus, 1910–1925*, ed. Jill Lloyd (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013), 30.

University and his sgraffito mural at the Aspen Institute are some of the only examples of his later wall paintings, although he did experiment with sculptural and environmental installations.⁴ Josef Albers, who was never a member of the workshop, created wall paintings in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, including in the Pan Am Building, for which Gropius was a consulting architect. Like Bayer's, these wall paintings in a large modernist corporate headquarters in New York, were abstract pictorial compositions derived from easel paintings or, in Albers case, his glass paintings. Albers' and Bayer's postwar wall paintings have little to do with polychrome architecture and the theories of color transforming and enhancing architecture discussed throughout this dissertation. As Hitchcock and Johnson explained in 1932, murals could be used successfully in international style buildings but they added, "it is most important that mural painting should be intrinsically excellent; otherwise a plain wall is better."⁵ However, when the authors discussed the use of color on wall surfaces, they urged the use of restrained white and off-white. They remarked that the emphasis on colored wall surfaces of the last decade in regards to structure, function, and light reflection had been abused.⁶ Hitchcock and Johnson effectively dismissed the wall color theories developed by Arndt and Scheper and white became the de facto color for the painted walls of modernist buildings in the United States.

The New Bauhaus in Chicago carried on many pedagogical and design goals of the German Bauhaus and this included a new variation on the wall painting workshop. Moholy-Nagy founded the school in 1937 with the support of the Association of Arts and Industries in Chicago. As indicated in its program, the students would first study in the preliminary workshop for two

⁴ Arthur A. Cohen, *Herbert Bayer: The Complete Work* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984) 166–168.

⁵ Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (New York: Norton, 1932), 85.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 87–88.

semesters and then choose a specialized workshop, in which they would stay for three years. Echoing the 1923 Bauhaus program, mediums and materials categorized the workshops. “Color (murals, decorating, wallpaper)” was the third listed. Although many of the new faculty members were identified in the program, no teacher was identified for the color workshop.⁷ The 1938 catalogue for the exhibition of student works listed Jean Héliion as its future leader, set to start in the fall. However, the New Bauhaus closed after only the one year, to be later born again as the School of Design, and Héliion was never employed.⁸ In 1945, the color workshop merged with a division of the light workshop creating graphic design department.⁹ The New Bauhaus, its successor, the School of Design (1939–1944), and then the Institute of Design (1944–present) joining the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1949, were primarily focused on photography, product design, and technological innovation. Although wall painting and color resumed at the New Bauhaus and School of Design, it seems to have been a workshop in name only. More research is necessary to better understand it.

The vocabulary and terminology prevalent at the New Bauhaus recalled the legacy of the earlier German wall painting workshop. Color had been a descriptor for the workshop since 1923, but additional terms were also used to identify the new workshop in the 1937 program: murals, decorating, painting, and wallpaper.¹⁰ All of these labels were applicable to German Bauhaus wall painting workshop throughout its different phases. Murals could have described the paintings of Bayer, Maltan and Arndt, and Kandinsky. Painting could have defined the wall

⁷ *The New Bauhaus, American School of Design, Founded by the Association of Arts and Industries* ed. New Bauhaus and László Moholy-Nagy (New Bauhaus: Chicago, 1937) 6.

⁸ Alain Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago: L'œuvre Pédagogique de László Moholy-Nagy* (Québec: Septentrion, 1995) 64, 442.

⁹ Alain Findeli, “Moholy-Nagy’s Design Pedagogy in Chicago (1937–1946),” in *The Idea of Design*, ed. Victor Margolin and Richard Buchanan, A Design Issues Reader (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 31–32.

¹⁰ *The New Bauhaus*, 4–6.

color schemes of 1926–1928 in the many Dessau buildings. Wallpaper as a descriptor reflected the success of the German workshop’s product. Therefore the title of the workshop in 1937 was all-inclusive, encompassing the former variations on the workshop, as discussed in this dissertation. Decorating was perhaps the most intriguing term used to describe it in 1937. It may reveal some truth about the workshop’s long hidden character, to decorate.

Decorative painting was the name of the workshop from 1919 to 1921, before it transformed into wall painting. The decorative and ornament were pervasive in modern art, although they were often suppressed, as Jenny Anger has discussed. In her example, Paul Klee redressed or compensated for an association with the decorative in order to build a successful career in 1920, the same period in which the wall painting workshop dismissed this association.¹¹ In Europe in the 1920s decorative, ornament, and decoration became taboo terms for the modernist. But what would have decorative meant in late 1930s America? Was it less fraught and controversial in 1937 when it could be used again to openly describe the workshop’s activity? This seems to have not been the case. The negative opinions of the decorative were already entrenched in American modernism by the late 1930s. The decorative and craft were associated with the feminine, and the applied arts were viewed as inferior to the fine art of painting, as has been discussed by many scholars including Susan Chevlowe in her discussion of Josef Albers and the department of design at Yale.¹² It was the easel paintings of Bauhäusler designers like Albers, Moholy-Nagy, and Bayer that earned them their fame and success in the US. Associations of abstraction, like the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock, with the decorative or

¹¹ Jenny Anger, *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 5.

¹² Susan Chevlowe, “Josef Albers and the Department of Design at Yale,” (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2003).

wallpaper were soundly rebuffed by the formalist theory of Clement Greenberg pervasive in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. As Elissa Auther has shown this derived from his reinforcement of the hierarchy between art and craft.¹³ Bauhaus wall painting developed in the inverse to Greenberg's position; it moved away from art and easel painting and toward craft, applied art and product design throughout the workshop's fourteen year tenure.

The connection between wall painting and decoration however should be explored further and could provide an important framework for understanding the workshop's struggles for self-definition and the theoretical debates between wall painting as subordinate to or independent from architecture. Although the word decorative was removed from the workshop's terminology, the idea of decorating with paint and color was perhaps never far from the workshop's mission. In addition, the feminine and the gendering of different mediums and techniques, which has been discussed in the literature on the weaving workshop, should also be considered for wall painting.¹⁴ While most women at the Bauhaus were funneled into weaving, a few studied in the Weimar wall painting workshop. The conflict between the woman wall painter Dörte Helm and Master of Craft Carl Schlemmer discussed in chapter two indicates the contentious gendering of wall painting at the Bauhaus and should be explored further. Collaboration, the strains and power dynamics between the wall painter and architect, is a theme, which reoccurs in many of the wall painting workshop's projects. The wall surfaces are sites of intersections between the authority

¹³ Elissa Auther, "The Decorative, Abstraction, and the Hierarchy of Art and Craft in the Art Criticism of Clement Greenberg," *Oxford Art Journal* 27, no. 3 (January 2004): 339–364.

¹⁴ Anja Baumhoff, *The Gendered World of the Bauhaus: The Politics of Power at the Weimar Republic's Premier Art Institute, 1919-1932* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001); T'ai Lin Smith, *Bauhaus Weaving Theory: From Feminine Craft to Mode of Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

of the architect and painter and the tension between these two figures should be a central problem discussed in future discussions of the workshop.

This dissertation provides the preliminary work for such future discussions. It consolidates the earlier fragmentary scholarship on the Bauhaus wall painting workshop, from short essays in German and English to the encouraging exhibition at the Bauhaus Archiv in 2005. It more than just describes or identifies the projects, painters, and buildings. I present a deeper understanding of the motivations and theories of the wall painting students and masters by scrutinizing closely the works on paper, black-and-white photographs, and the restorations using close visual analysis. Throughout this dissertation I problematize and investigate definitions, searching to define terms like “painter-decorator” and “wall painting.” The common assumptions and prominence of Oskar Schlemmer or Bayer works are interrogated. The long misunderstood Bauhäuslers, such as Hannes Meyer or virtually unknown Heinrich Bebernis are reevaluated. Connections outside of the Bauhaus are scrutinized and expose possibilities for future research including Adolf Hölzel’s wall painting theories, the Hungarian links to the wall painting workshop, and polychrome architecture throughout Europe. This dissertation adds to the growing body of literature revising the paradigm of the white walls of modernism, helping to correct that long held belief. Before whiteness became a defining idiom of modernist architecture, the walls were colored and painting was integrated with its surface. In this dissertation, the designs and theories of Bauhaus wall painters Arndt and Scheper demonstrate the diversity of approaches to applying color to architectural space. As Kandinsky maintained in 1924, color could enhance the form of architecture or it could transform it, and the wall painting workshop explored both of these possibilities. The workshop’s evolving projects often reflected the changing attitude of the school, from expressionist crafts to industrialized mass production and epitomized the Bauhaus

goal of unifying the arts. As this dissertation proves, even without the original works surviving, the wall painting workshop was continually analyzing, experimenting, and improving its approach to the wall surface, and in the end it was one of the most successful workshops at the Bauhaus.

Illustrations

Chapter 1



Figure 1.1. Johannes Molzahn, *Der Idee-Bewegung-Kampf*, 1919.



Figure 1.2. Henry van de Velde, Havana Tobacco Company, Berlin, 1899.



Figure 1.3. Hans Kramer, Interior, c.1910.

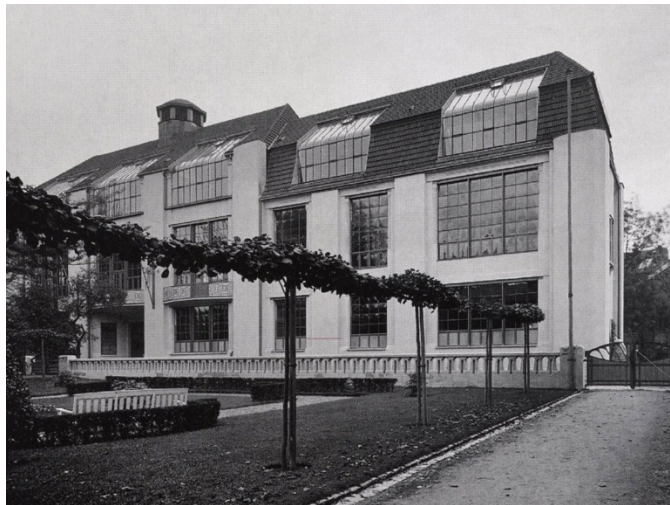


Figure 1.4. Henry van de Velde, School of Arts and Craft, Weimar, 1904-1911.



Figure 1.5. Henry van de Velde, School of Arts and Craft, Workshop Building, Weimar. 1905-1906 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2012).

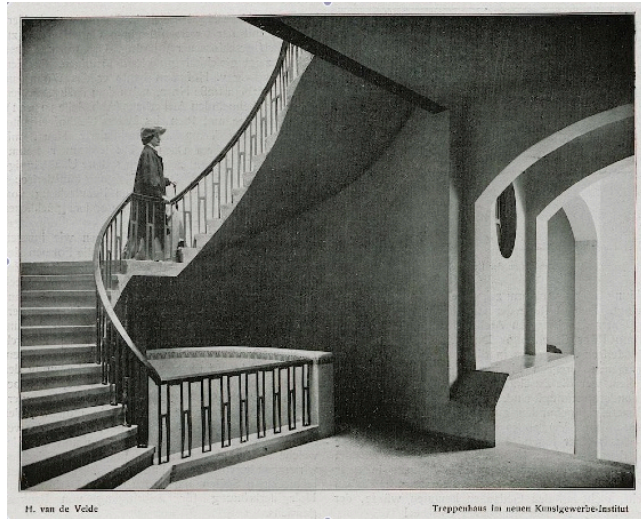


Figure 1.6. Henry van de Velde, Interior, School of Arts and Craft, Workshop Building, (Photo: published in *Kunstgewerbeblatt*, 1908).



Figure 1.7. Georg Kolbe and Erwin Hass, Wall Paintings in the Vestibule of Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Model Factory, Werkbund exhibition, Cologne, 1914.



Figure 1.8. Students in the Wall Painting Workshop in front of the Bauhaus Workshop Building, Weimar, c. 1920. Bauhaus Archiv.

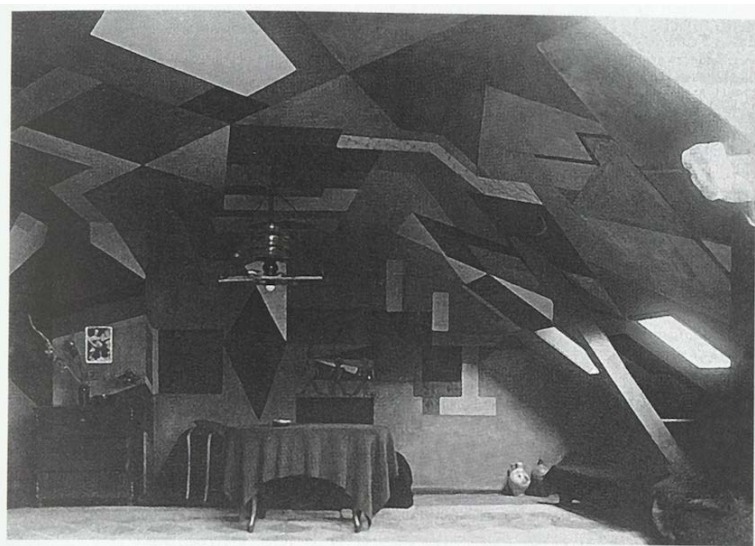


Figure 1.9. Peter Drömmer, Werner Lange and Karl Peter Röhl, Painting in Studio of Werner Lange, Kiel, c. 1920-1921.



Figure 1.10. Franz Mutzenbecher, Wall Paintings in the Clubroom of Bruno Taut's Ledigenheim Siedlung, Lindenhof, in Berlin-Schöneberg, 1920.

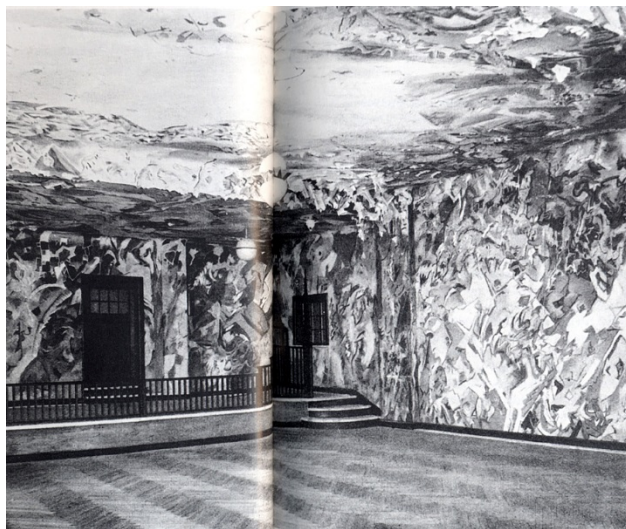


Figure 1.11. Gottlieb Elster, Paul Gösch and Franz Mutzenbecher, Wall Paintings in Ballroom of Bruno Taut's Ledigenheim Siedlung, Lindenhof, in Berlin-Schöneberg, 1920.



Figure 1.12. Ulrich Nitschke, Wall Painting in Theodor Fischer's Pfullinger Hallen, Pfullingen, 1906 (Photo: published in Adolf Hölzel "Über Bildliche Kunstwerke Im Architektonischen Raum," *Der Architekt* (1909)).

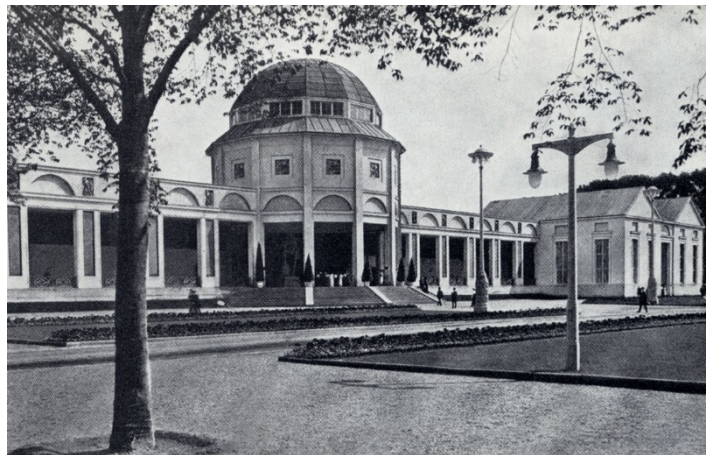


Figure 1.13. Theodor Fischer, Main Hall, Werkbund exhibition, Cologne, 1914.



Figure 1.14. Oskar Schlemmer, Sketch for *Mocking of the Devout Nun in the Convent of White Women and the Appearance of the Wonderful Cross*, 1914.



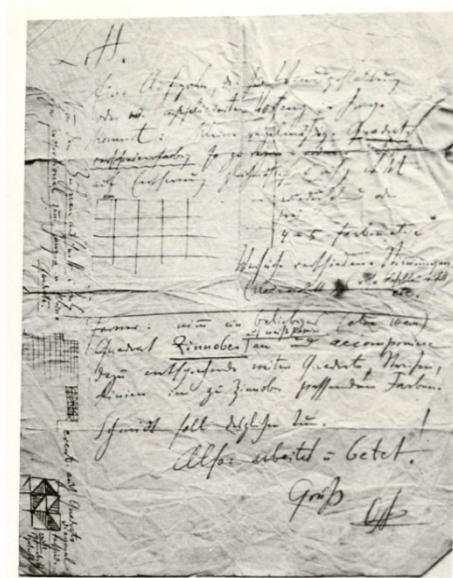
Figure 1.15. Oskar Schlemmer, *Mocking of the Devout Nun in the Convent of White Women and the Appearance of the Wonderful Cross*, in Theodor Fischer's Main Hall, Werkbund exhibition, Cologne, 1914 (destroyed).



Figure 1.16. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).



Figure 1.17. Oskar Schlemmer, *Watercolor sketch for Jena Theater*, 1922.



14 Oskar Schlemmer, 'Aufgabe für Wandgestaltung', 1922 (WK.4.5)

Figure 1.18: Oskar Schlemmer, *Eine Aufgabe, Die Für Wandgestaltung oder auch Applizierten Vorhang in Frage Kommt*, handwritten note with drawing, pen on paper, 1922.



Figure 1.19. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Auditorium Interior, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).

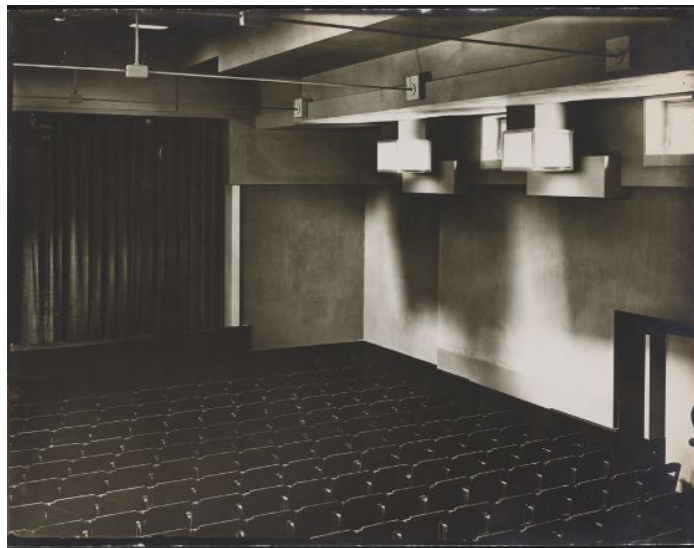


Figure 1.20. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Auditorium Interior, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).

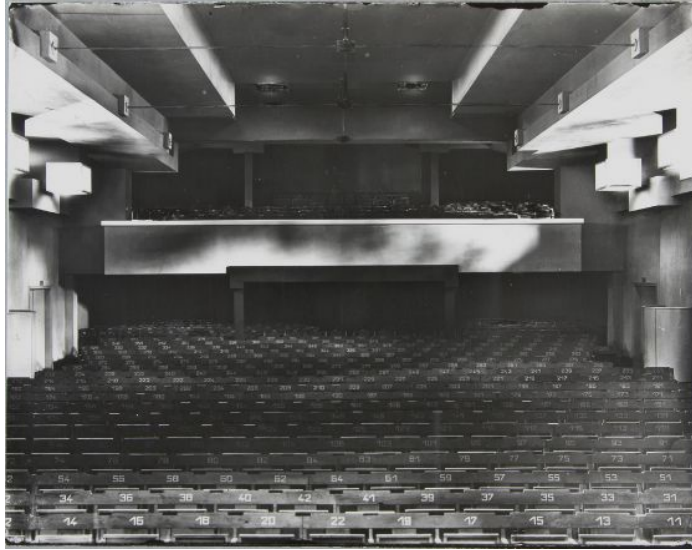


Figure 1.21. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Auditorium Interior, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).



Figure 1.22. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Lobby, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).

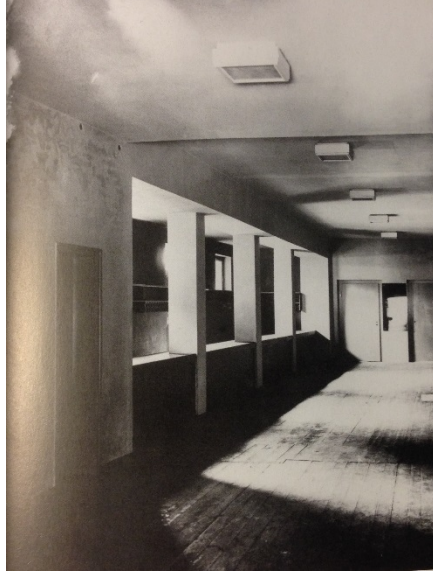


Figure 1.23. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Coat Check Interior, Jena Municipal Theater, 1921-1922 (Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Ise Gropius).



Figure 1.24. Hinnerk Scheper, *Plan for Jena Municipal Theater Ceiling*, 1922.



Figure 1.25. Joost Schmidt, Vestibule of Main Bauhaus building, 1923 (Reconstructed by Hubert Schiefelbein, 1976) (Photo M. Ridler, 2013).

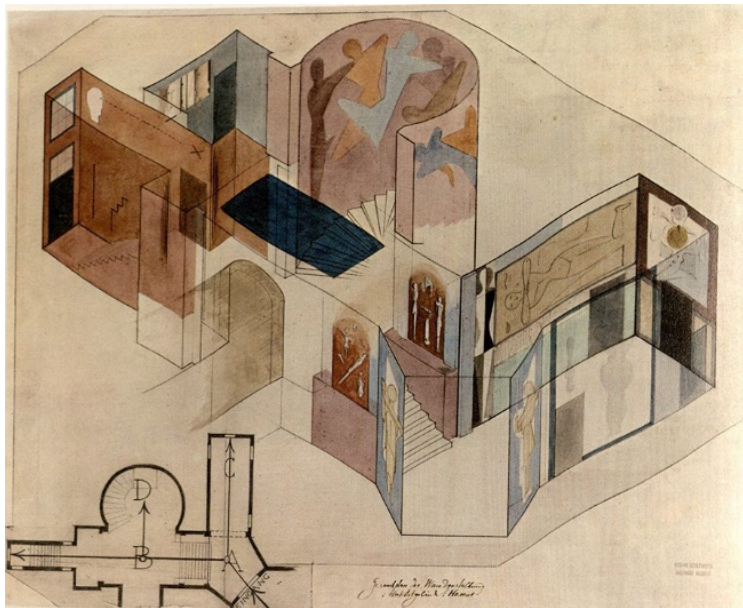


Figure 1.26. Oskar Schlemmer, *Total Design for Wall Paintings in Workshop Building, Weimar*, 1923 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

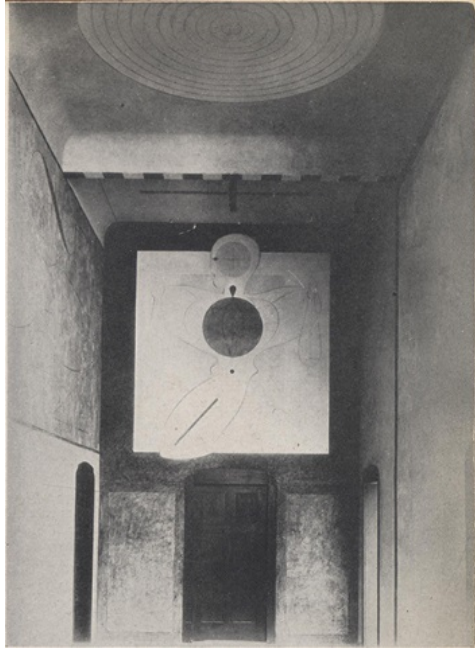


Figure 1.27. Oskar Schlemmer, *Wall Paintings in the Bauhaus Workshop Building, Weimar, 1923* (destroyed in 1930) (Photo: published in Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, and Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus, 1919-1928*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938).

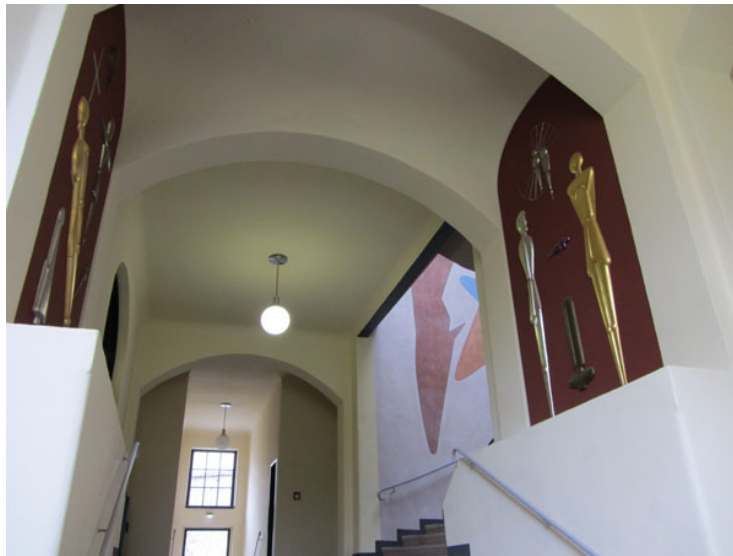


Figure 1.28. Oskar Schlemmer, *Wall Paintings in the Bauhaus Workshop Building, Weimar, 1923* (Reconstructed reliefs by Hubert Schiefelbein, 1979) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 1.29. Oskar Schlemmer, *Wall Paintings in the Bauhaus Workshop Building, Weimar, 1923* (Reconstructed by Bruno Dolinski, 1980) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 1.30. Oskar Schlemmer, *Wall Paintings in the Bauhaus Workshop Building, Weimar, 1923* (Reconstructed by Bruno Dolinski, 1980) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

Chapter 2



Figure 2.1. Kandinsky, *White Cross*, 1922 (The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice).



Figure 2.2. Painting of Kandinsky's *Jury Free* Wall Paintings by Wall Painting Workshop Students, 1922, (Musée national d'art modern, Center George Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.3. Painting of Kandinsky's *Jury Free* Wall Paintings by Wall Painting Workshop Students, 1922 (Musée national d'art modern, Center George Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.4. Painting of Kandinsky's *Jury Free* Wall Paintings by Wall Painting Workshop Students, 1922 (Musée national d'art modern, Center George Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.5. Painting of Kandinsky's *Jury Free Wall Paintings* by Wall Painting Workshop Students, 1922 (Musée national d'art modern, Center George Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.6. Kandinsky, *Sketch for Jury Free Wall Paintings (A)*, 1922, Gouache and white chalk on black paper, 34.7 x 60 cm. (Musée national d'art modern, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.7. Kandinsky, *Sketch for Jury Free Wall Paintings (B)*, 1922, Gouache and white chalk on black paper, 34.7 x 60 cm. (Musée national d'art modern, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.8. Kandinsky, *Sketch for Jury Free Wall Paintings (C)*, 1922, Gouache and white chalk on black paper, 34.7 x 60 cm. (Musée national d'art modern, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris).



Figure 2.9. Kandinsky, *Sketch for Jury Free Wall Paintings (D)*, 1922, Gouache and white chalk on black paper, 34.7 x 60 cm. (Musée national d'art modern, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris).

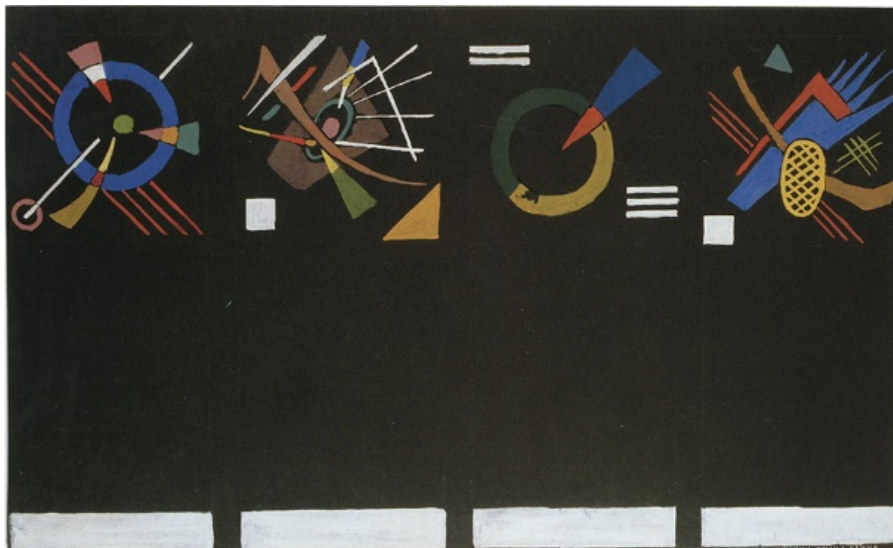


Figure 2.10. Kandinsky, *Sketch for Jury Free Wall Paintings (E)*, 1922, Gouache and white chalk on black paper, 34.7 x 60 cm. (Musée national d'art modern, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris).

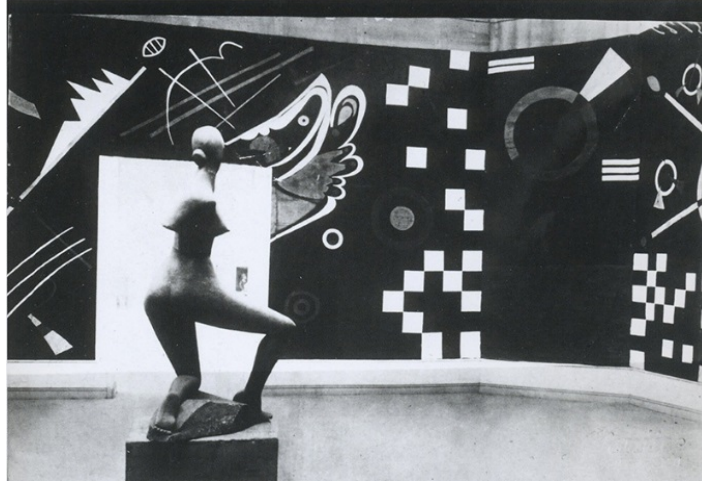


Figure 2.11. Installation view of *Juryfreie Kunstschau* “Jury-Free Art Show,” Berlin, 1922 (Photo: C.J. Von Dühne and E. Henschle, Centre Georges Pompidou).

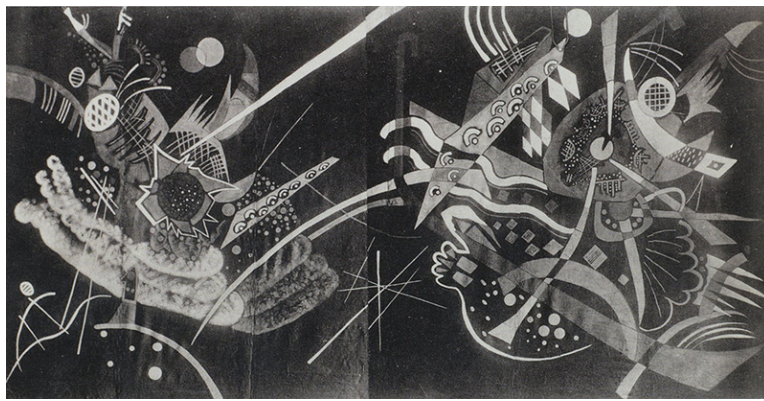


Figure 2.12. Kandinsky, *Peinture murale*, 1922 (Photo: published in Will Grohman, *Kandinsky*, Cahiers d'Art editions, January 15, 1931).



Figure 2.13. Kandinsky, *Kleine Welten IV (Small Worlds IV)*, 1922, lithograph (The Museum of Modern Art).

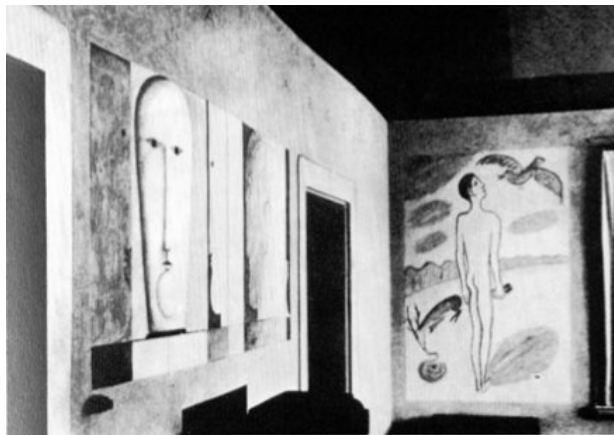


Figure 2.14. Oskar Schlemmer (left), *Head Frieze*, and Werner Gilles (right), *Nude from the Back with Bird and Deer*, c. 1923, in Adolf Meyer's Apartment in Weimar (Photo: c. 1924).



Figure 2.15. Oskar Schlemmer (left), *Figure with Square between A and O (Alpha and Omega)*, and Werner Gilles (right), *Landscape with Nudes and Horses*, c. 1923, in Adolf Meyer's Apartment in Weimar (Photo: c. 1924).

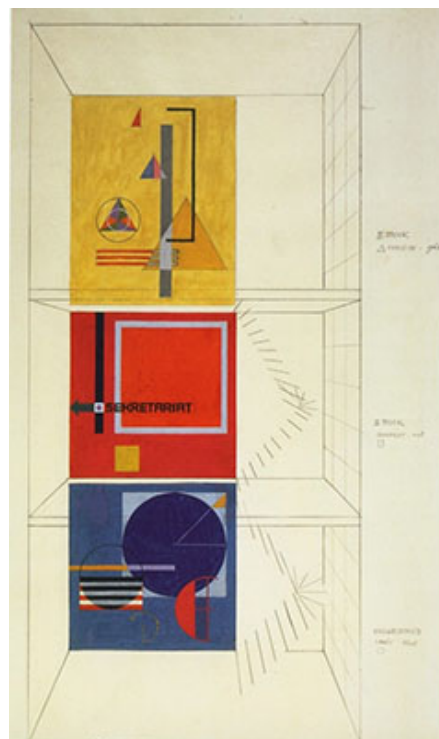


Figure 2.16. Herbert Bayer, *Design for Wall Painting*, 1923, Gouache and pencil on paper (Collection Merrill C. Berman).



Figure 2.17. Lucia Moholy, *Bauhaus Building Weimar, Wall Painting by Herbert Bayer*, 1924 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

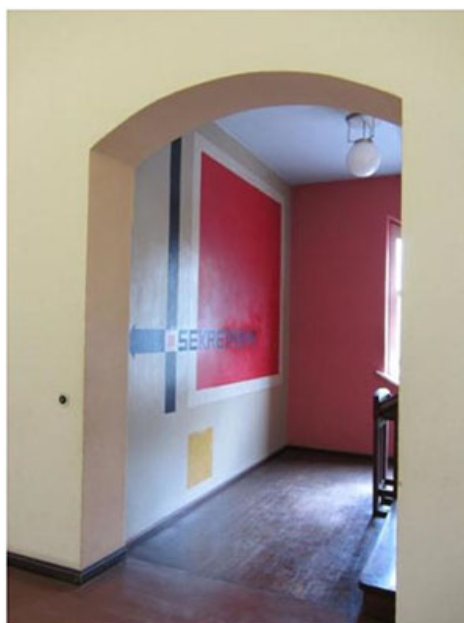


Figure 2.18. Herbert Bayer, *Wall Paintings*, in Back Staircase of Main Bauhaus Building, 1923, Bauhaus University, Weimar (Reconstruction by Werner Claus, 1976-1976) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 2.19. Herbert Bayer, *Wall Paintings*, in Back Staircase of Main Bauhaus Building, 1923, Bauhaus University, Weimar (Reconstruction by Werner Claus, 1976-1979) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

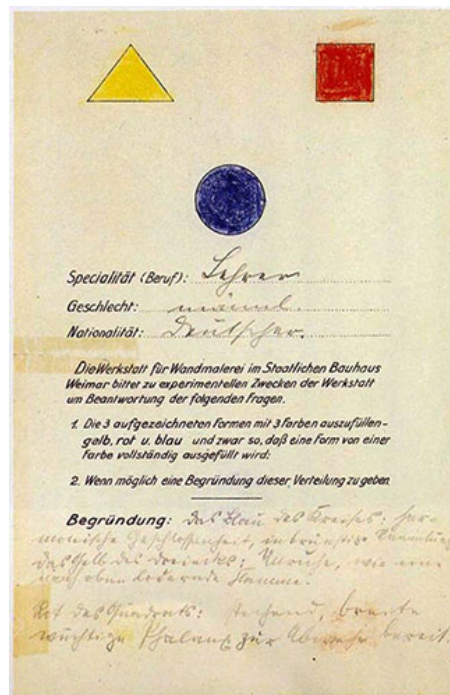


Figure 2.20. Kandinsky, *Questionnaire for Bauhaus Students*, possibly completed by Gertrud or Alfred Arndt, 1922-1923 (Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin).

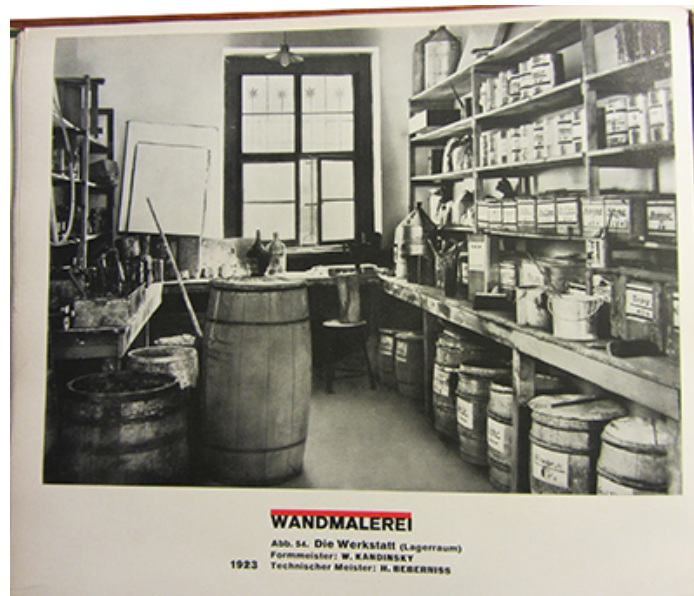


Figure 2.21. Title Page of Wall Painting Section, in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*, (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 96.

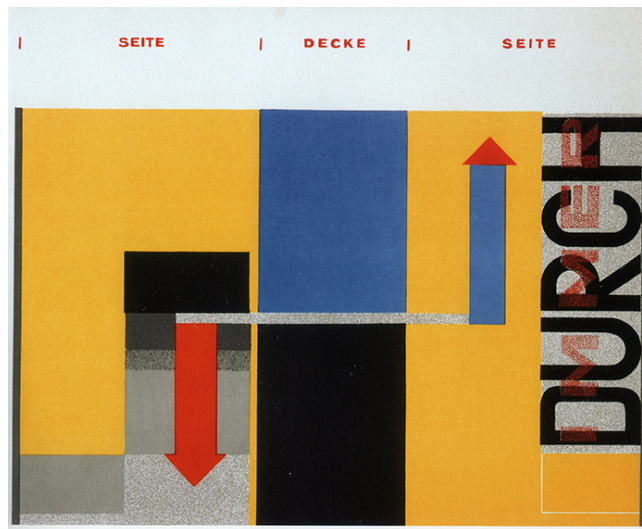


Figure 2.22. Peter Keler and Farkas Molnar, *Space Creation for a Passageway*, 1923, lithograph, (published in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*. (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 97).



Figure 2.23. Peter Keler, *KURI*, 1922 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

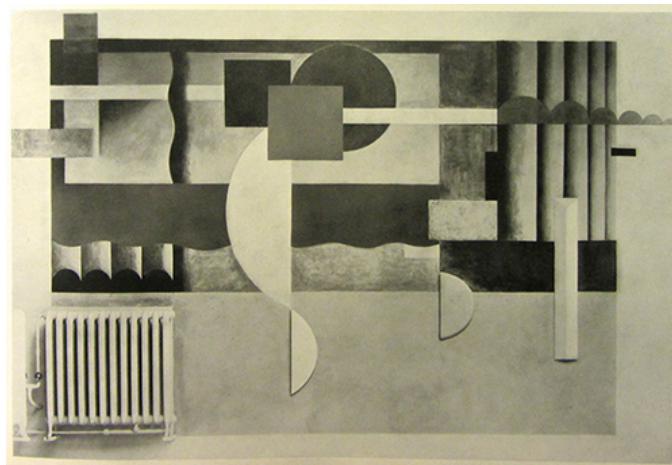


Figure 2.24. Josef Maltan and Alfred Arndt, *Fresco*, 1923 (published in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*. (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 99).



Figure 2.25. Josef Maltan and Alfred Arndt, *Fresco*, 1923 (Bauhaus Alben).

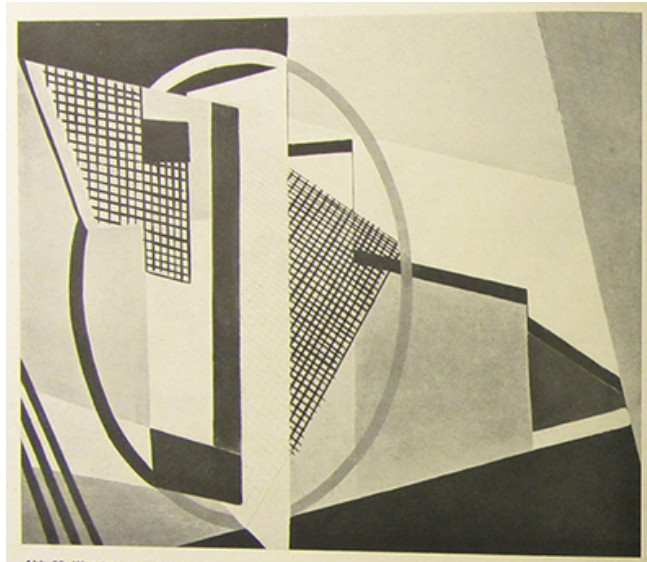


Figure 2.26. Walter Menzel, *Fresco*, 1923 (published in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*. (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 100).

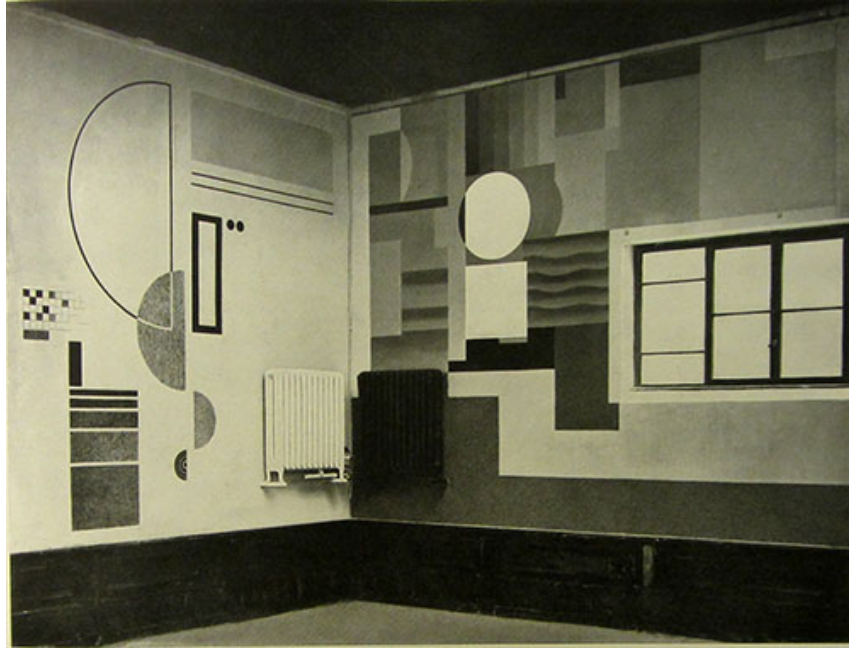


Figure 2.27. Herbert Bayer (left), *Sgraffito*, and Rudolf Paris (right), *Distemper*, 1923 (published in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*. (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 101).

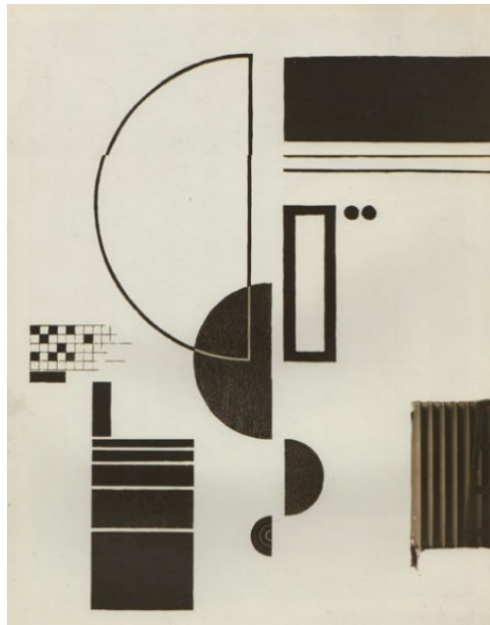


Figure 2.28. Herbert Bayer, *Sgraffito*, 1923 (Photo: in *Bauhaus Alben 3*).

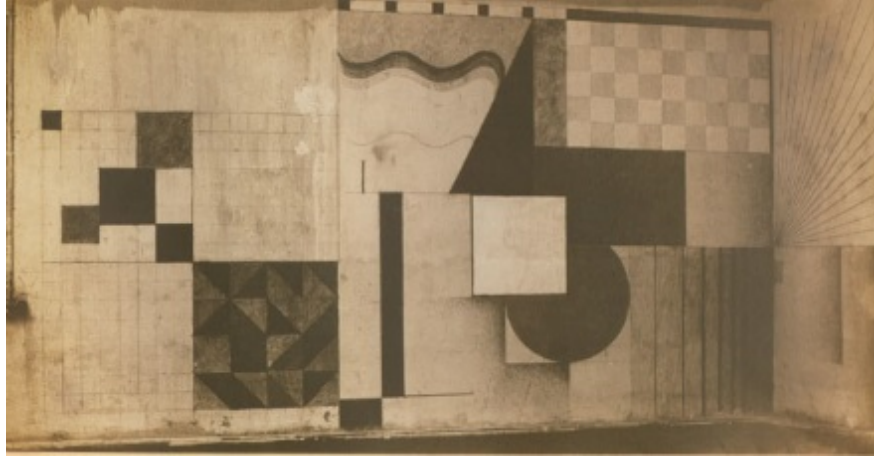


Figure 2.29. Wall Painting Exercises, c. 1922-1923 (Photo: in Bauhaus Alben 3).



Figure 2.30. Lajos Kassak, *Bildarchitektur*, c. 1922-1923.



Figure 2.31. Georg Muche, Haus am Horn, Exterior, Weimar, 1923 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2012).



Figure 2.32. Alfred Arndt and Josef Maltan, *Wall Paintings in Living Room*, in Georg Muche, Haus am Horn, 1923, Weimar (Reconstruction: 1999) (Photo: Roland Dreßler, Weimar).



Figure 2.33. Alfred Arndt and Josef Maltan, *Wall Paintings in Living Room*, in Georg Muche, *Haus am Horn*, 1923, Weimar (Reconstruction: 1999).



Figure 2.34. Alfred Arndt and Josef Maltan, *Wall Paintings in Living Room and Office Niche*, in Georg Muche, *Haus am Horn*, 1923, Weimar, published in Adolf Meyer, *Ein Versuchshaus des Bauhauses in Weimar* (München: A. Langen, 1924) 67.



Figure 2.35. Alfred Arndt and Josef Maltan, *Wall Paintings in Living Room*, in Georg Muche, Haus am Horn, 1923, Weimar (Photo: Unknown Photographer, 1923, Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 2.36. Walter Gropius, Director's Office, Bauhaus, Weimar, 1924 (Photo: retouched and colored by Dr. von Löbbecke & Co., Erfurt and published in *Neue Arbeiten der Bauhauswerkstätten*, Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925).



Figure 2.37. Walter Gropius, Director's Office, Bauhaus, Weimar, 1924 (Reconstructed, 1999) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 2.38. Walter Gropius, Director's Office, Bauhaus, Weimar, 1924 (Reconstructed, 1999) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

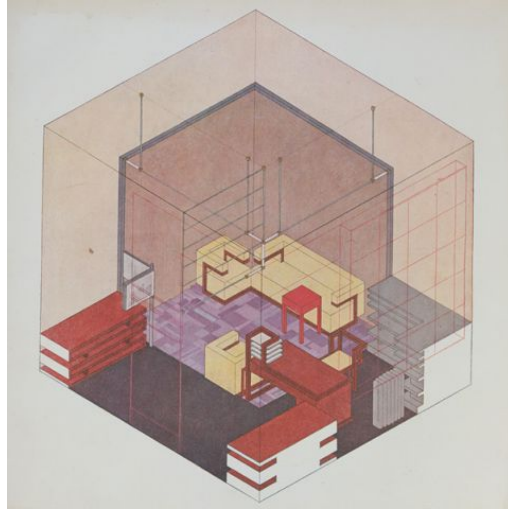


Figure 2.39: Herbert Bayer, *Isometric of Director's Office*, 1923, lithograph, (published in *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919-1923*. (Weimar-München: Bauhausverlag, 1923) 175).

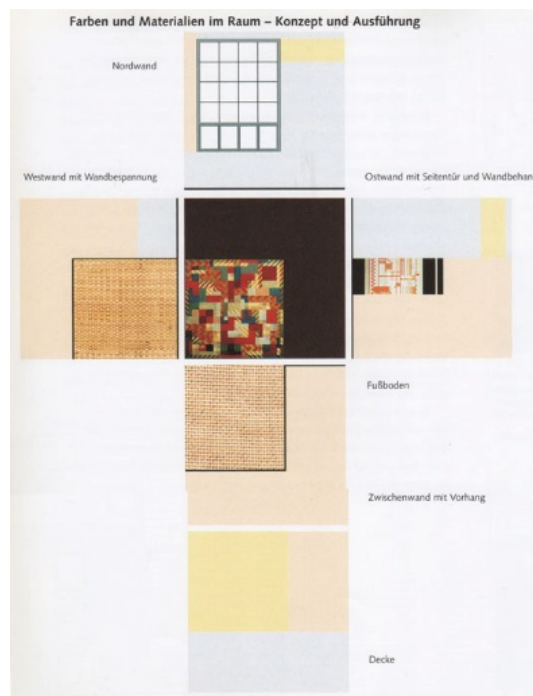


Figure 2.40. Gerhard Oschmann, *Colors and Materials in Space – Concept and Execution*, (Diagram of the Restoration of the Director's Office), c. 1999 (published in Klaus-Jürgen Winkler and Gerhard Oschmann, *Das Gropius-Zimmer: Geschichte und Rekonstruktion des Direktorenraumes am Staatlichen Bauhaus in Weimar 1923/24*. (Weimar: Verlag der Bauhaus-Universität, 2008) 96).



Figure 2.41. Walter Gropius, Director's Office, Bauhaus, Weimar, 1924 (Reconstructed, 1999)
(Photo: Falko Behr).

Chapter 3

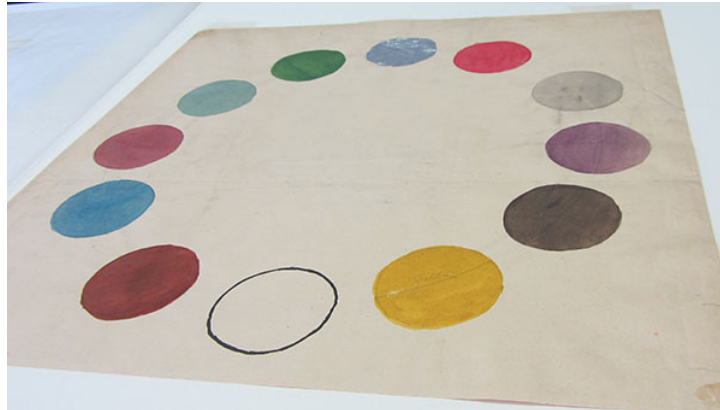


Figure 3.1. Alfred Arndt, *Color Wheel from the Lesson of Gertrud Grunow*, c. 1921, watercolor, ink, pencil and collage on paper (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.2. Alfred Arndt, *Italian City I*, 1922, watercolors and pencil on paper, 24.9 x 22.2cm.



Figure 3.3. Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer, Haus Auerbach, Jena, Germany, 1924.



Figure 3.4. Edvard Munch, *Portrait of Felix Auerbach*, 1906.



Figure 3.5. Walter Gropius, *Honey Comb Design from the Bauhaus Exhibition*, 1923.

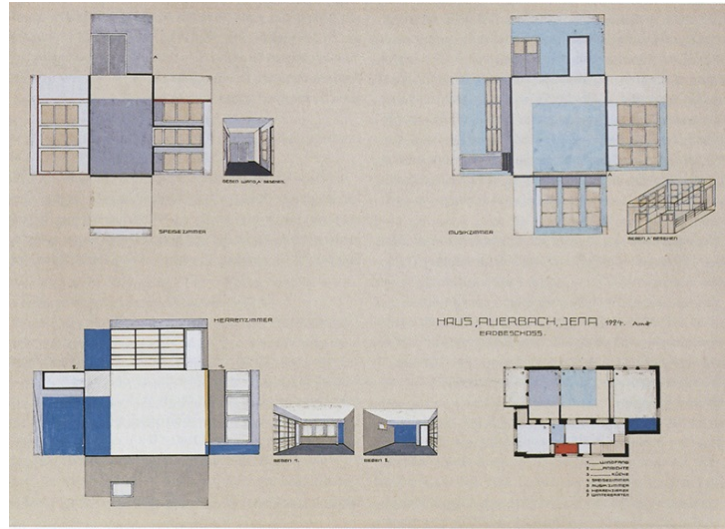


Figure 3.6. Alfred Arndt, *Color Plan for Haus Auerbach, First Floor, 1924* (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

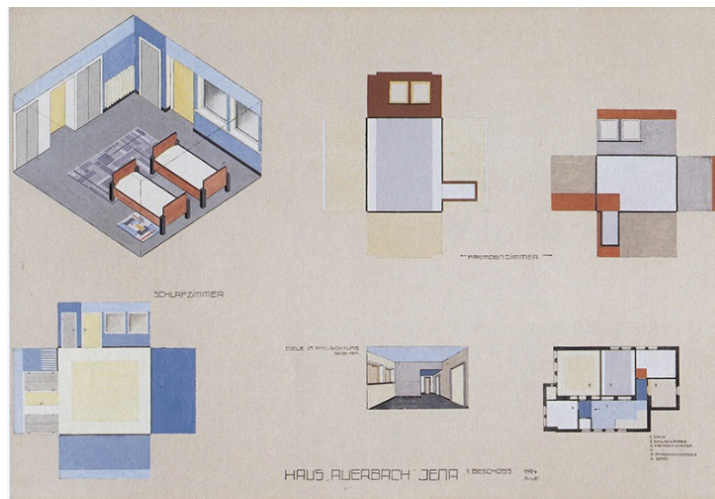


Figure 3.7. Alfred Arndt, *Color Plan for Haus Auerbach, Second Floor, 1924* (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.8. Alfred Arndt, Music Room and Dining Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, Jena, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995).



Figure 3.9. Alfred Arndt, Music Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.10. Alfred Arndt, Music Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.11. Music Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924.



Figure 3.12. Reimagined Color of Music Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Retouched Photo: M. Ridler, 2014).



Figure 3.13. Alfred Arndt, Dining Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.14. Alfred Arndt, Dining Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.15. Alfred Arndt, Wall Between Music and Dining Room in Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer's Haus Auerbach, 1924 (Color Restoration, 1994/1995) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.16. Gerrit Rietveld, Interior, Schröder House, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 1924.

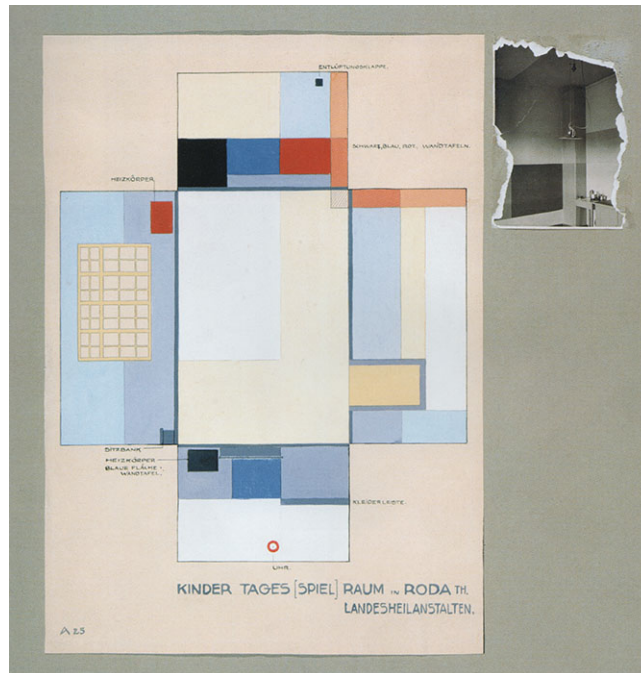


Figure 3.17. Alfred Arndt, *Color Plan for a Children's Room*, 1925, photograph, ink and tempera on paper, (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

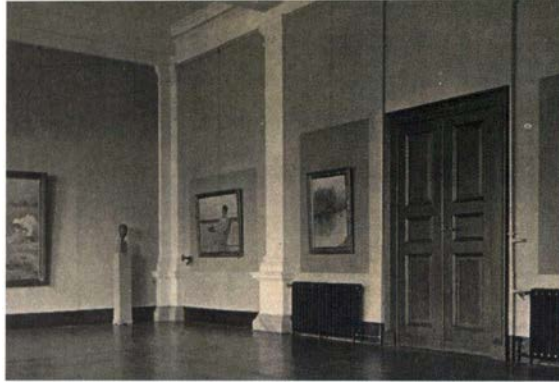


Figure 3.20. Hinnerk Scheper, Wall Paintings in State Museum, Weimar, 1922 – 1923 (Theo van Doesburg Archive, The Hague).

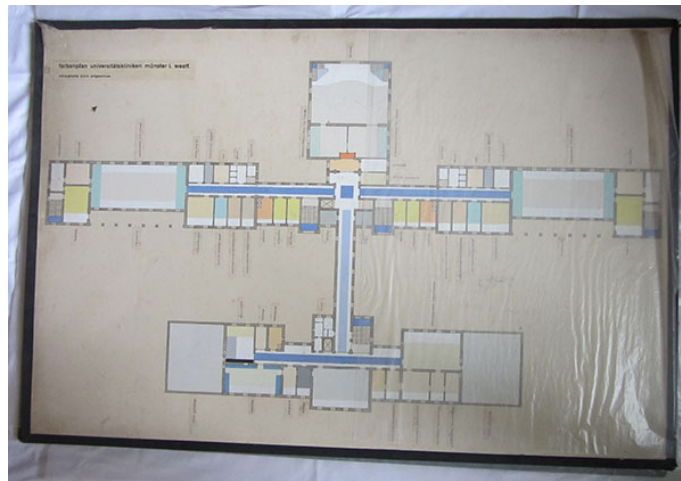


Figure 3.21. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan, First Floor*, for University Hospital Münster, 1924 (Scheper Archiv, Berlin).

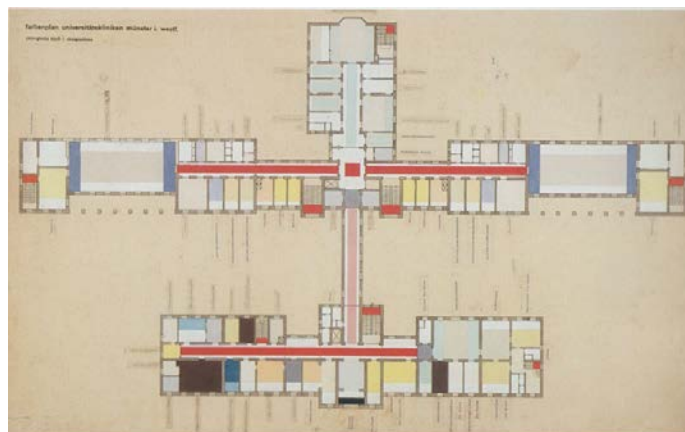


Figure 3.22. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan, Second Floor*, for University Hospital Münster, 1924 (Scheper Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.23. Hinnerk Scheper, “*Pink*” *Color Plan*, for Onkel Tom’s Hütte Restaurant, Berlin, 1925.



Figure 3.24. Hinnerk Scheper, “*Blue*” *Color Plan*, for Onkel Tom’s Hütte Restaurant, Berlin, 1925.



Figure 3.25. The Wall Painting Workshop Painting Onkel Tom’s Hütte Restaurant, Berlin, 1925 (Photo: Unknown Photographer) (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.26. Walter Gropius, Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1925-1926 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.27. Walter Gropius, Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1925-1926 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

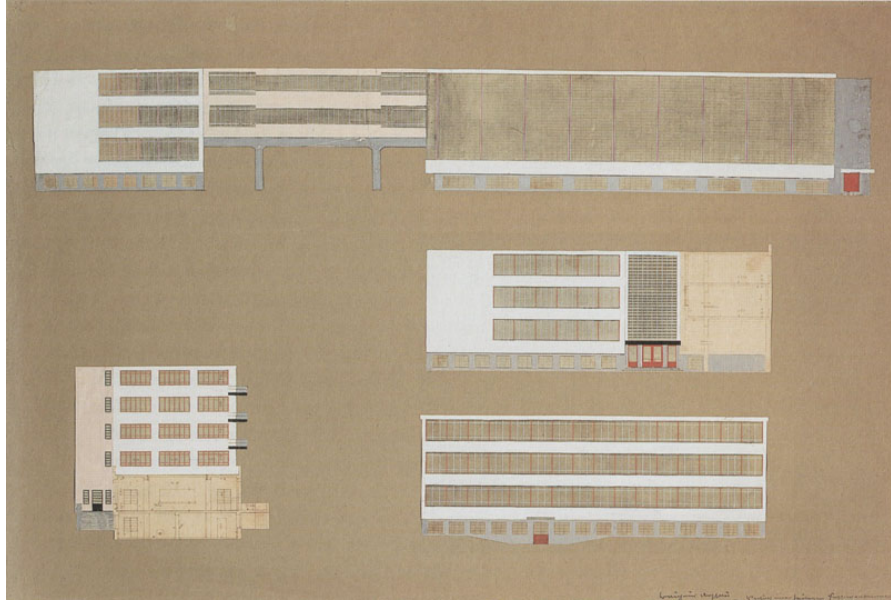


Figure 3.28. Hinnerk Scheper, *Exterior Color Plan, Elevations*, for the Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

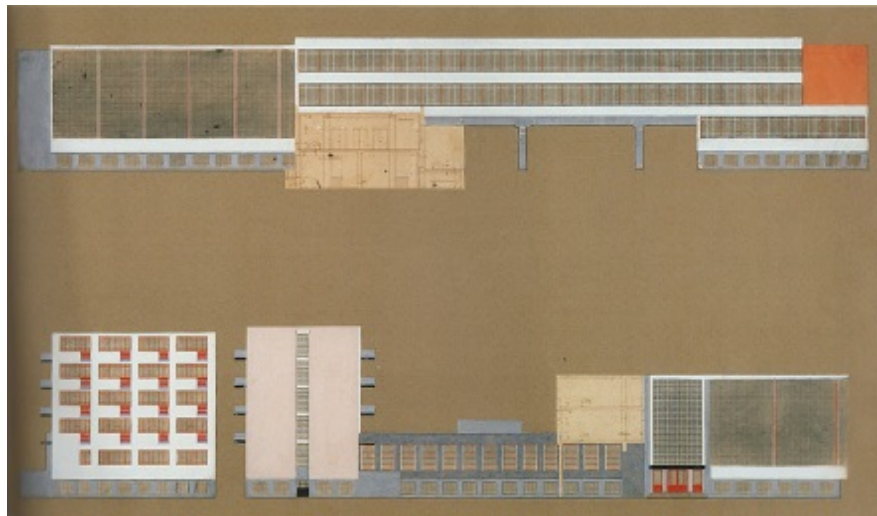


Figure 3.29. Hinnerk Scheper, *Exterior Color Plan, Elevations*, for the Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

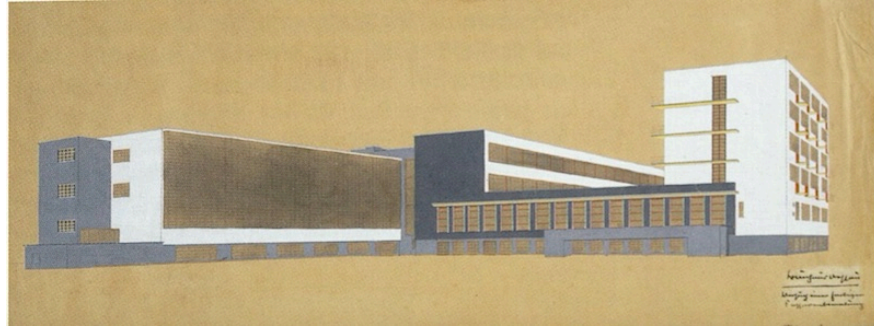


Figure 3.30. Hinnerk Scheper, *Exterior Color Plan, Perspective*, for the Bauhaus Building, Dessau,, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.31. J. McNeven, *Interior of the Great Exhibition building*, 1851, lithograph (Victoria and Albert Museum)

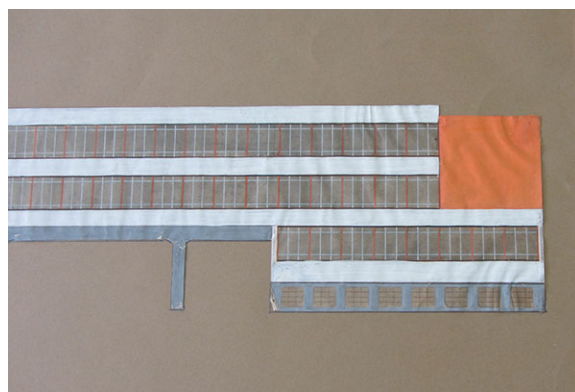


Figure 3.32. Hinnerk Scheper, *Exterior Color Plan, Elevations (Detail)*, for the Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.33. Bruno Taut and Martin Wagner, *Horseshoe Siedlung*, Berlin-Britz, 1925-1926, (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013)

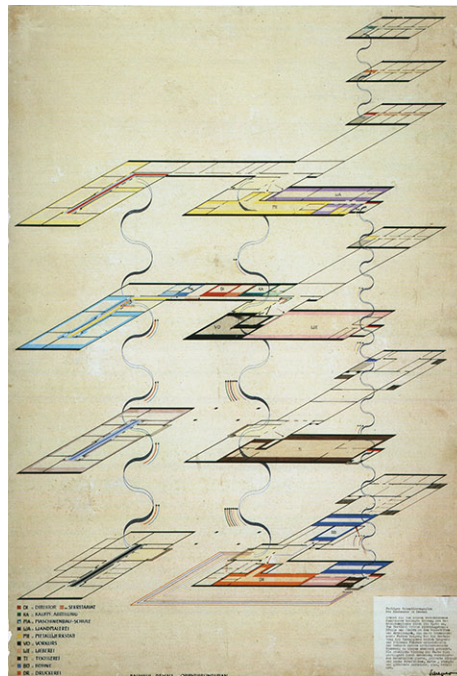


Figure 3.34. Hinnerk Scheper, *Orientation Plan* for the Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926, tempera and ink on paper, with label (Bauhau-Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.35. Walter Gropius, Main Entrance, Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1925-1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

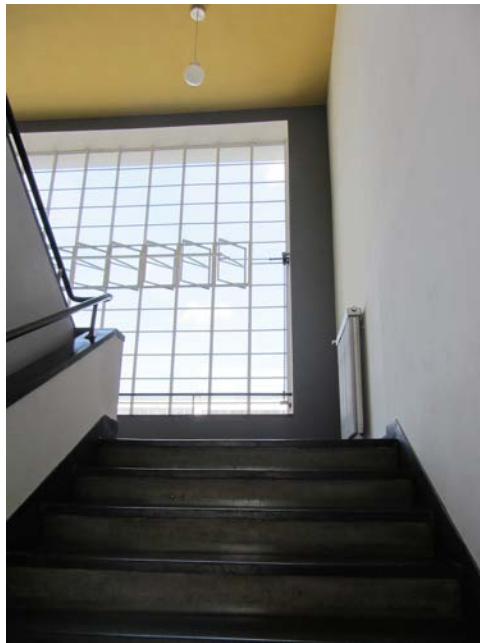


Figure 3.36. Hinnerk Scheper, Main Staircase Between the Second and Third Floors, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

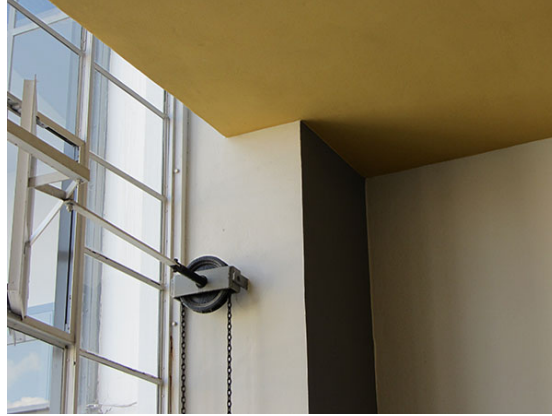


Figure 3.37. Hinnerk Scheper, Detail, Main Staircase, Between First and Second Floor, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.38. Hinnerk Scheper, Main Staircase, View to Second Floor, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.39. Hinnerk Scheper, Staircase in Studio Wing, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.40. Oskar Schlemmer, *Bauhaus Stairway*, 1932, oil on canvas (The Museum of Modern Art).

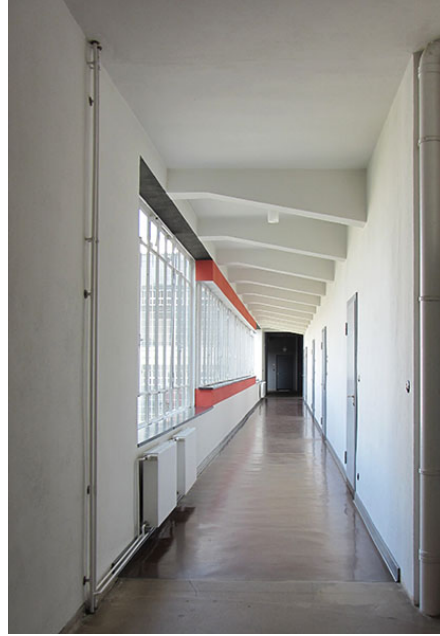


Figure 3.41. Hinnerk Scheper, Second Floor Bridge, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.42. Hinnerk Scheper, Detail, Second Floor Bridge, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.43. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for First Floor, Floor Plan*, for Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

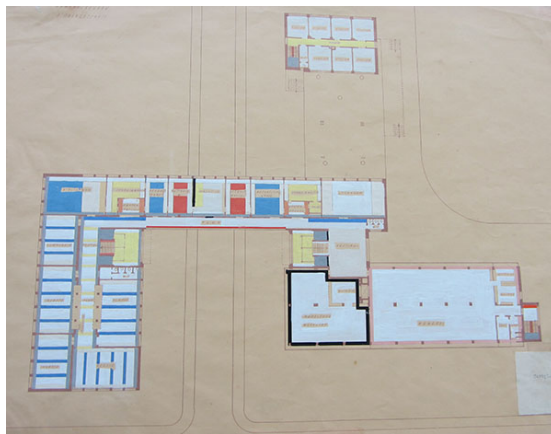


Figure 3.44. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for Second Floor, Floor Plan*, for Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.45. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for Third Floor, Floor Plan*, for Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

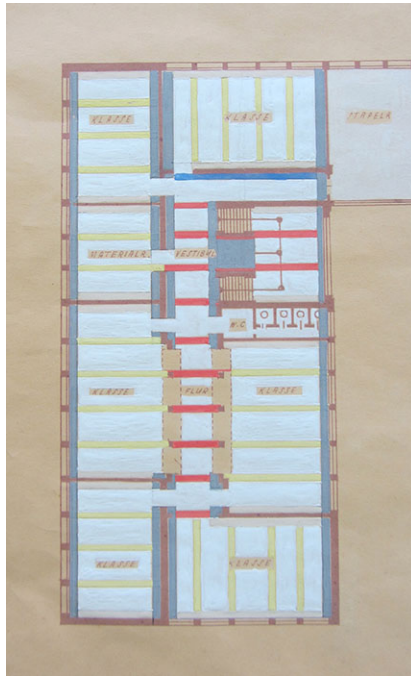


Figure 3.46. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for Third Floor, Floor Plan (Detail of Municipal School Wing)*, for Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.47. Hinnerk Scheper, *Third Floor, Municipal School Wing*, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.48. Hinnerk Scheper, Detail, Clearstory Window Between Classroom and Hallway, Third Floor, Municipal School Wing, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

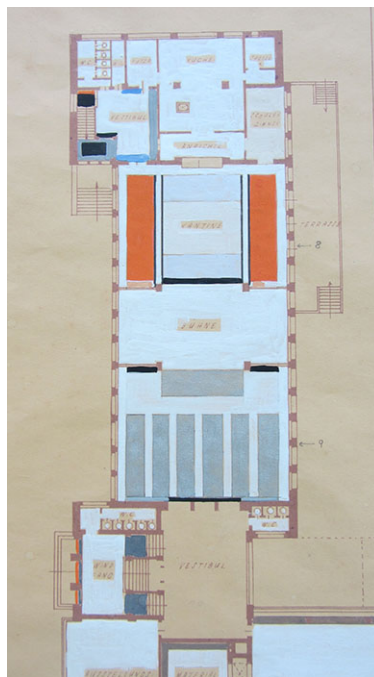


Figure 3.49. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for First Floor, Floor Plan (Detail of Festive Wing)*, for Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 3.50. Hinnerk Scheper, Detail, Canteen in Festive Wing, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 3.51. Hinnerk Scheper, Detail, Theater in Festive Wing, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

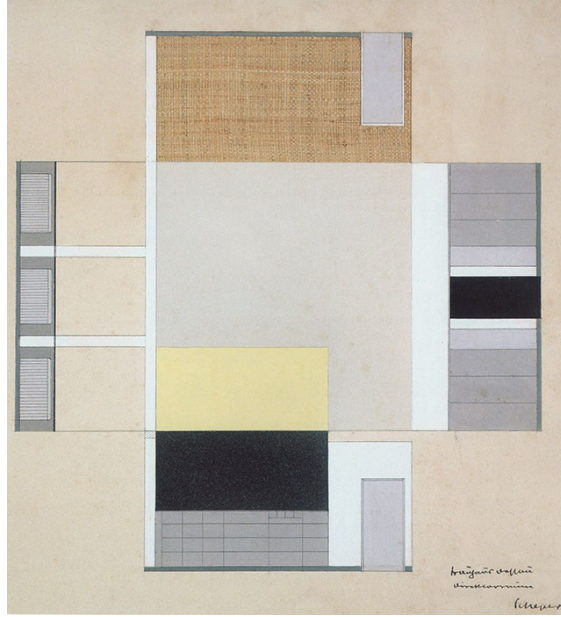


Figure 3.52. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for Director's Office*, 1925-1926, tempera, raffia, pencil and ink on cardboard (Scheper Archive, Berlin).



Figure 3.53. Hinnerk Scheper, *Director's Office*, in Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Building, Dessau, 1926 (Color Restoration, 1996-2006) (Photo: Martin Brück / Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, 2006).

Chapter 4

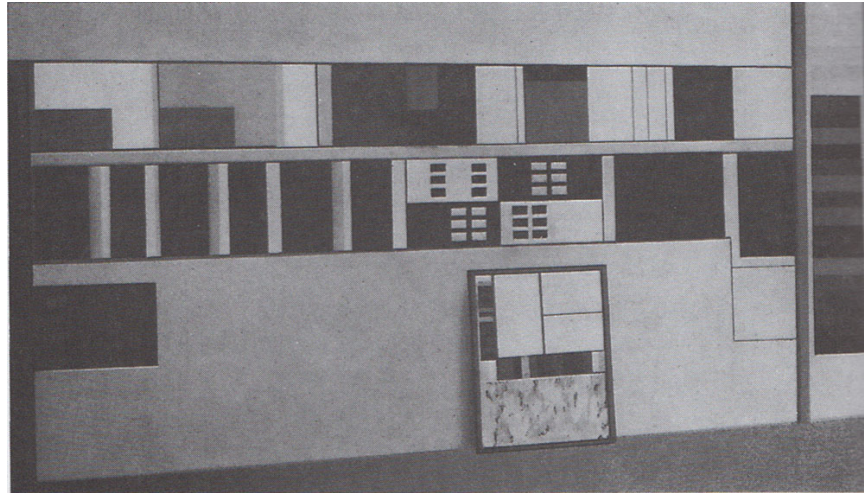


Figure 4.1. Experimental Wall with Plaster and Painting Techniques in the Wall Painting Workshop, Bauhaus, Dessau, c. 1927 (Photo: Unknown Photographer).

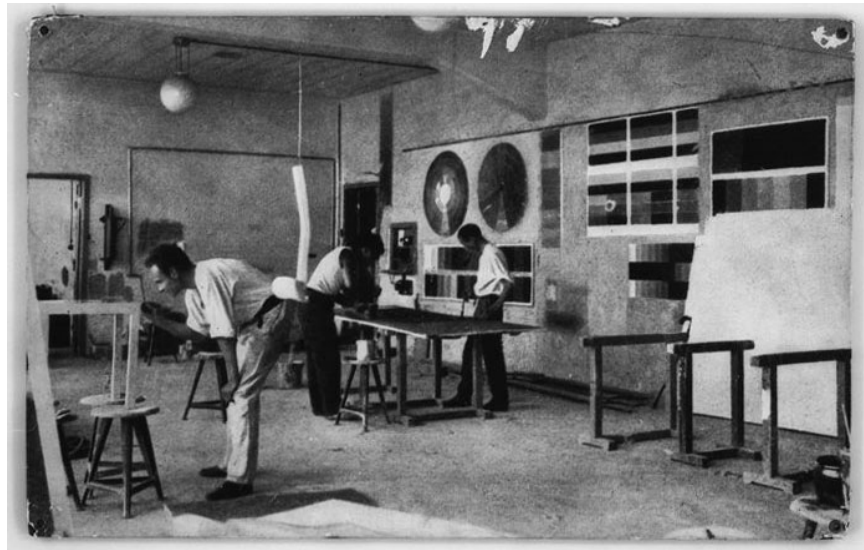


Figure 4.2. Students Working in the Wall Painting Workshop, Bauhaus Dessau, c.1927 (Photo: Unknown Photographer).

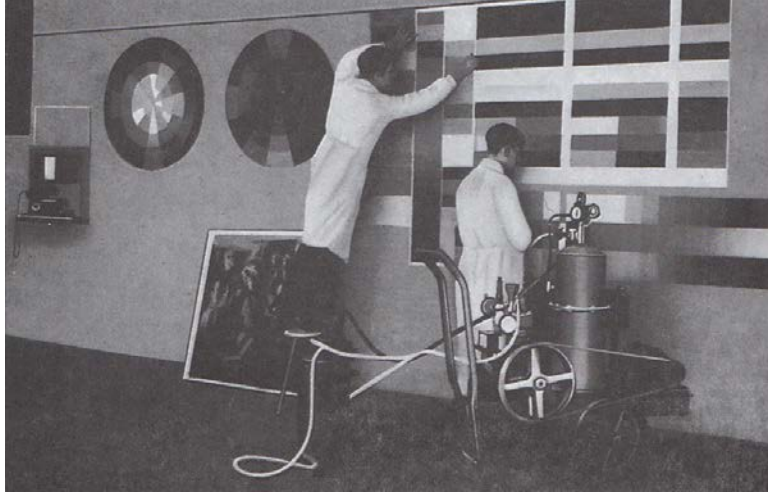


Figure 4.3. Students Working in the Wall Painting Workshop, Bauhaus Dessau, c.1927 (Photo: Unknown Photographer).



Figure 4.4. Lothar Lang, *Color Study, dunkelheit der farbe entgegengesetzt zur lichtstärke der wandflächen*, (Darkness of color against the luminous intensity of the wall surface), c.1926-1928, from Hinnerk Scheper's Lessons in the Wall Painting Workshop (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

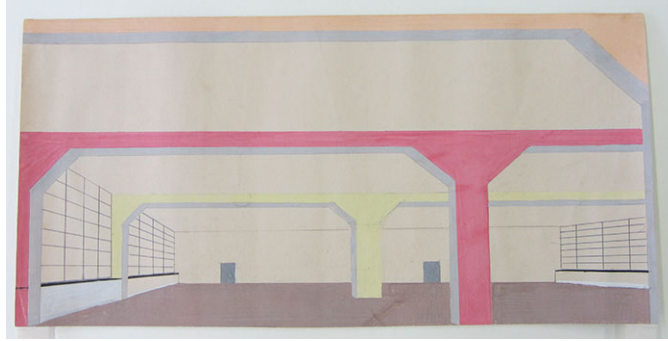


Figure 4.5. Lothar Lang, *Color Design for the Workshop Space at the Bauhaus*, c. 1926-1928, from Hinnerk Scheper's Lessons in the Wall Painting Workshop (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

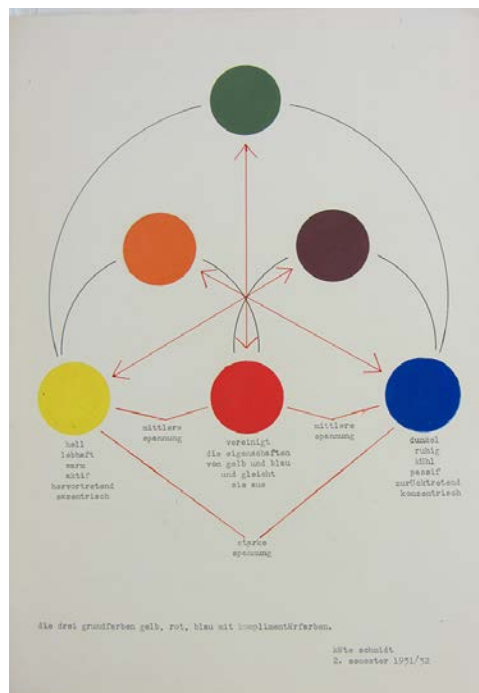


Figure 4.6. Käthe Schmidt, *The Three Primary Colors, Yellow, Red, Blue with Complementary Colors*, 1931-1932, from Hinnerk Scheper's Lessons in the Wall Painting Workshop, (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.7. Walter Gropius, Dessau-Törten Siedlung, Building Type IV, Dessau, 1928 (Photo: Emil Theis, 1929).

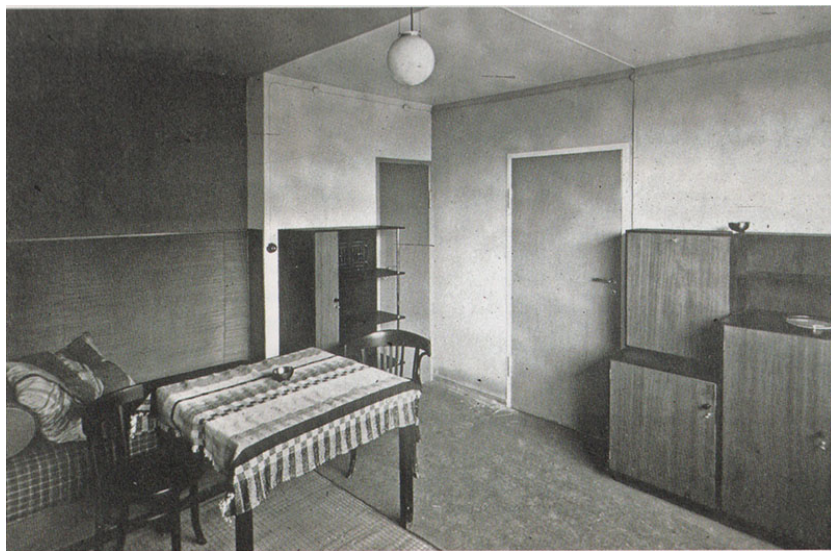


Figure 4.8. Walter Gropius, Living Room, Model House, Dessau Törten Siedlung, Building Phase I, Dessau, 1926 (Photo: Erich Consemüller, 1926).

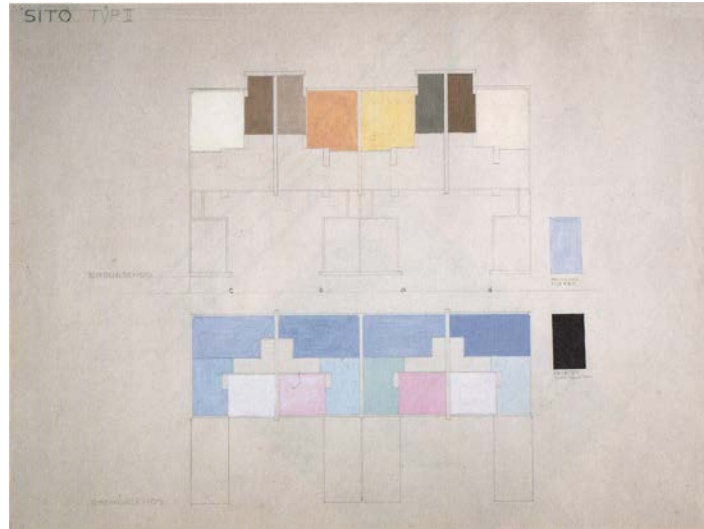


Figure 4.9. Heinrich Koch, *Color Plan for the Ceilings of House Type I.2-1927*, for Dessau Törten Siedlung, 1927, watercolor and pencil on card (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

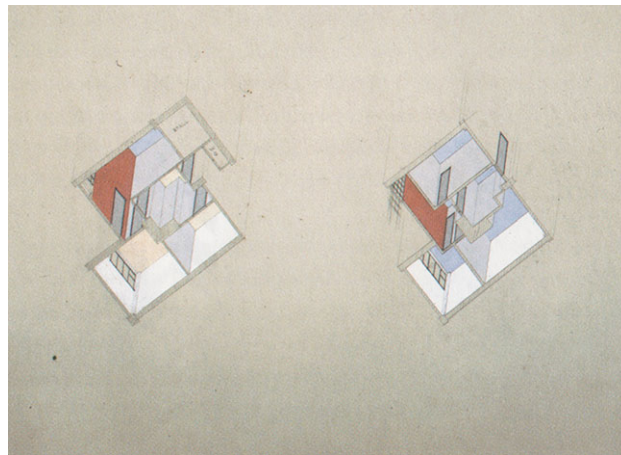


Figure 4.10. Heinrich Koch, *Isometric Color Plan for House Type II-1927*, for Dessau Törten Siedlung, 1927, pencil drawing and watercolor on paper, (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

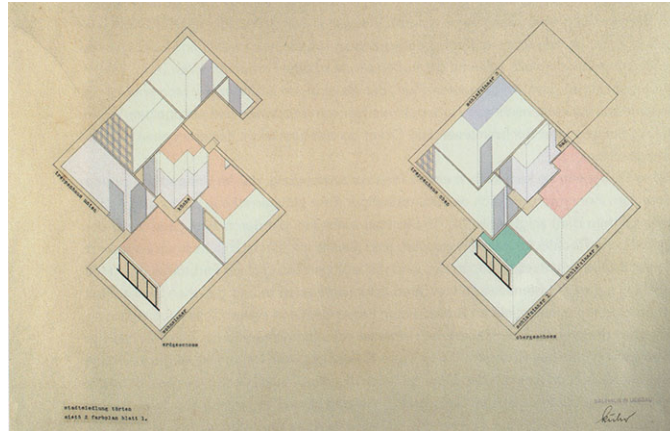


Figure 4.11. Fritz Kuhr, *Isometric Color Plan for House Type II-1927*, for Dessau Törten Siedlung, 1927, ink, gouache, pencil on paper (Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Walter Gropius).

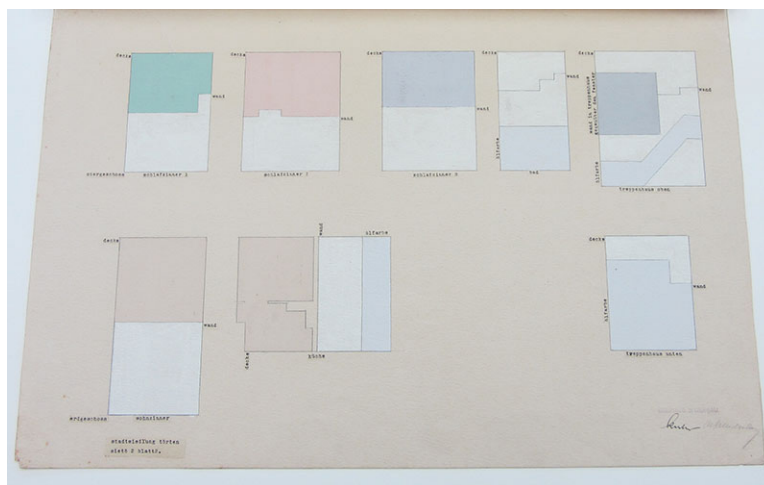


Figure 4.12. Fritz Kuhr, *Elevations Color Plan for House Type II-1927*, for Dessau Törten Siedlung, 1927, ink, gouache, pencil on paper (Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Walter Gropius) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2014).

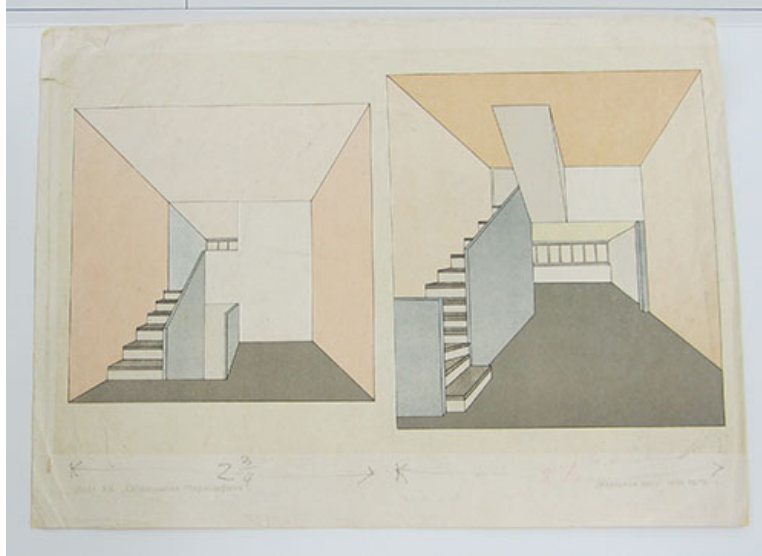


Figure 4.13. Hinnerk Scheper, *Color Plan for Apartment Type F*, for Moisei Yakovlevich Ginsburg's and Ignatii Milinis' Narkomfin housing complex, Moscow, 1929, color print (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.14. Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Federal School of the German Trade Union Federation, (Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes) (ADGB), Bernau, 1928-1930 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.15. Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Entrance to Green Housing Block, Interior, Federal School of the German Trade Union Federation, (Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes) (ADGB), Bernau, 1928-1930 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.16. Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Green Housing Block, Interior, Federal School of the German Trade Union Federation, (Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes) (ADGB), Bernau, 1928-1930 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.17. Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer, Green Housing Block, Interior, Federal School of the German Trade Union Federation, (Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes) (ADGB), Bernau, 1928-1930 (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

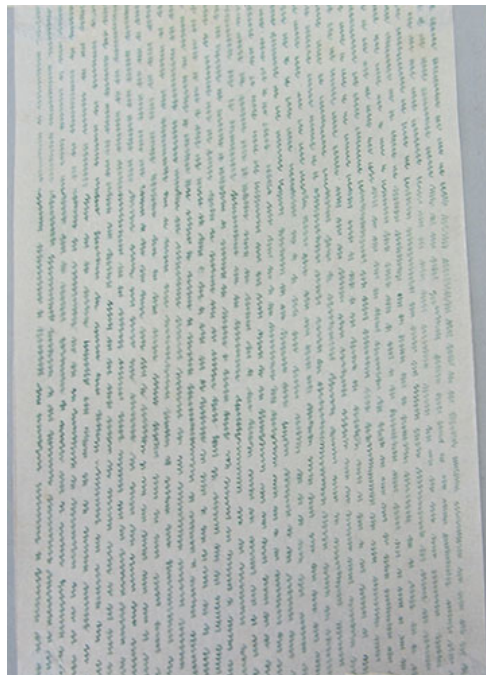


Figure 4.18. Hermann Fischer, Wallpaper Design, c. 1929-1932 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

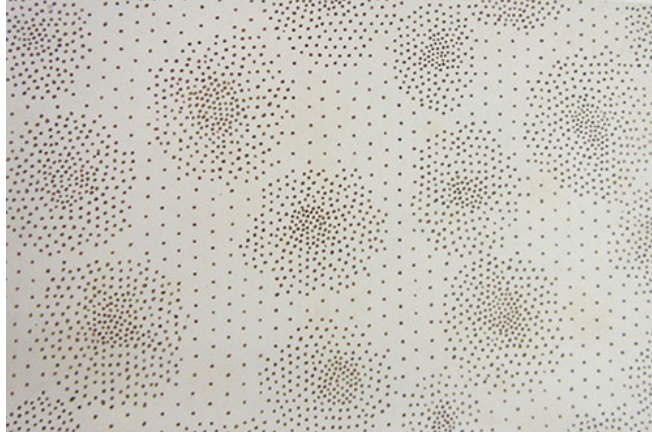


Figure 4.19. Hermann Fischer, Wallpaper Design, c. 1929-1932 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin)
(Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

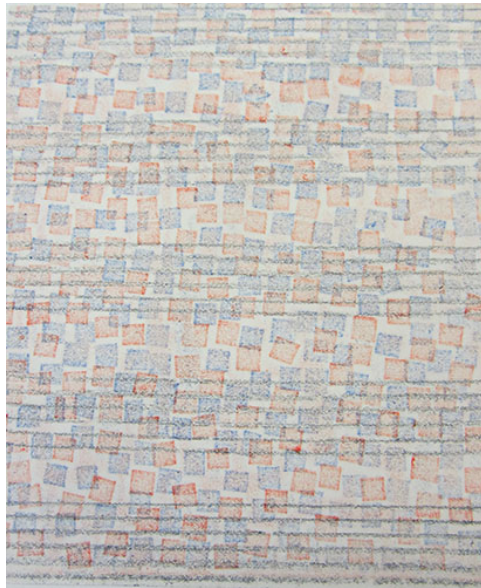


Figure 4.20. Hermann Fischer, Wallpaper Design, c. 1929-1932 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin)
(Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).



Figure 4.21. Hermann Fischer, Wallpaper Designs for Bauhaus Wallpaper Pattern b1, 1929 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

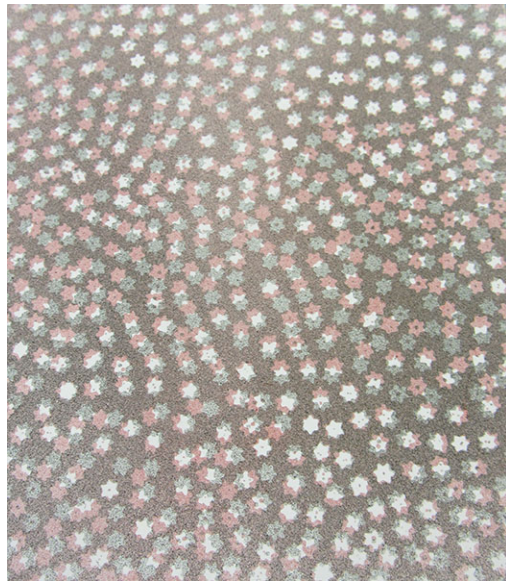


Figure 4.22. Hermann Fischer, Wallpaper Designs, c. 1929-1932 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin) (Photo: M. Ridler, 2013).

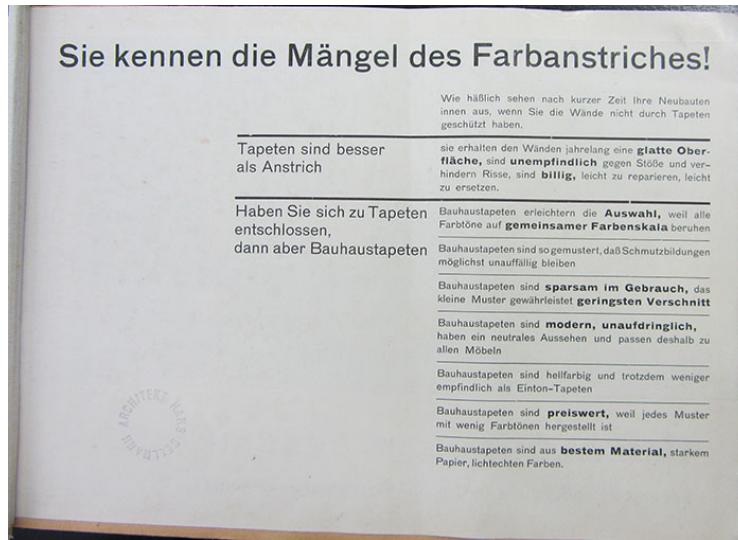


Figure 4.23. Title Page of Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1929-1930 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 4.24. Second Page of Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1929-1930 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 4.25. First Bauhaus Wallpaper Collection, 1930 (Published in Kieselbach, Burckhard, ed. *Bauhaustapete: Reklame & Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising & Success of a Brandname*. Translated by Claudia Spinner. Köln: DuMont, 1995).



Figure 4.26. b1, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, c.1931 (Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Josef Albers)

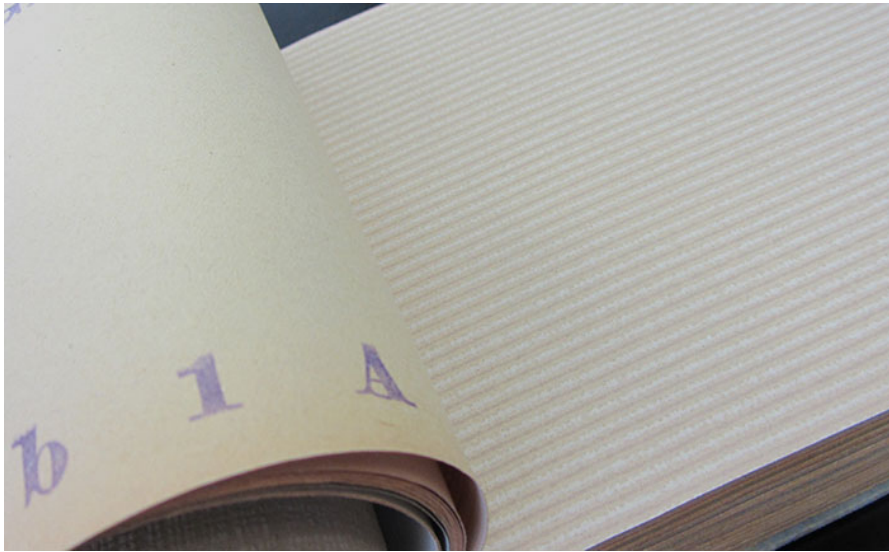


Figure 4.27. b1, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1929-1930 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 4.28. b1, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1929-1930 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

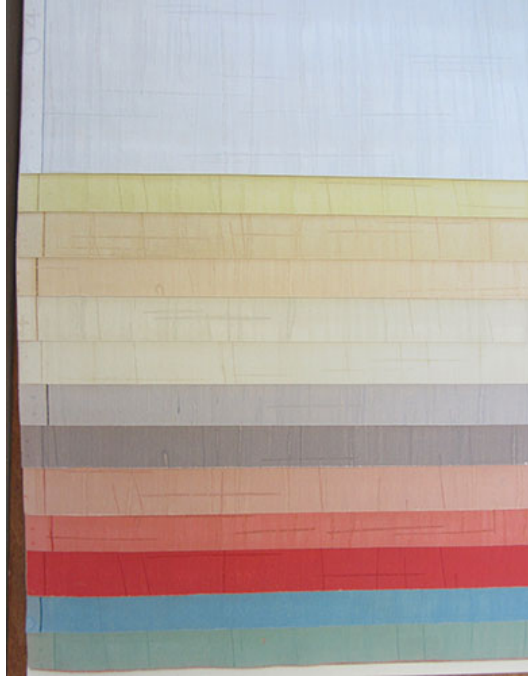


Figure 4.29. b4, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, c. 1931 (Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Josef Albers).

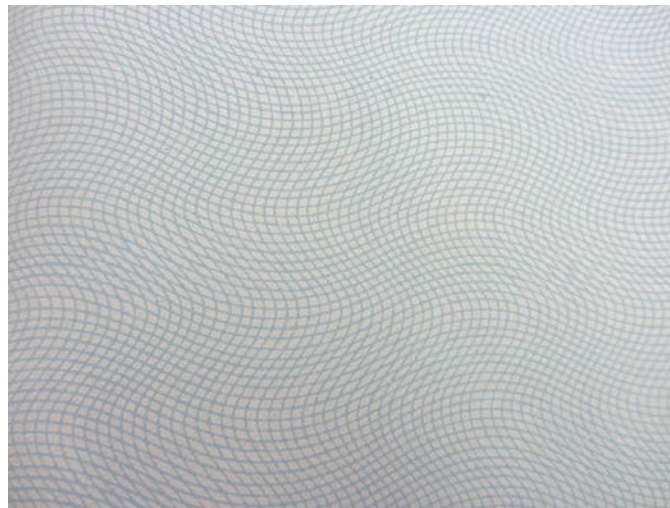


Figure 4.30. b13, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1929-1930, (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).



Figure 4.31. Bauhaus Wallpaper Samples with Notations (Published in Kieselbach, Burckhard, ed. *Bauhaustapete: Reklame & Erfolg einer Marke = Advertising & Success of a Brandname*. Translated by Claudia Spinner. Köln: DuMont, 1995).

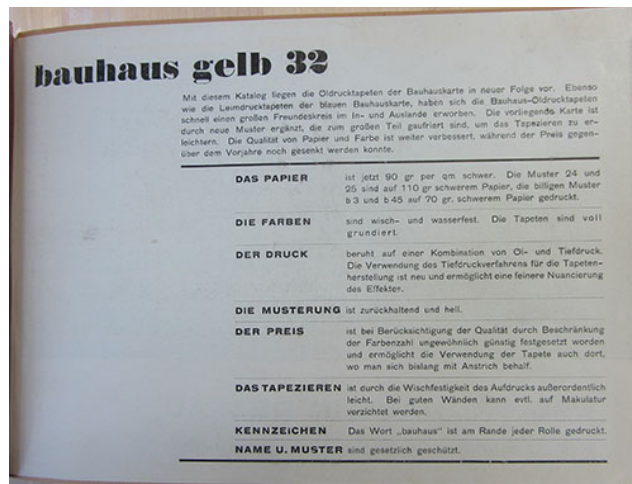


Figure 4.32. Title Page of Bauhaus Wallpaper, Yellow Collection, 1932 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

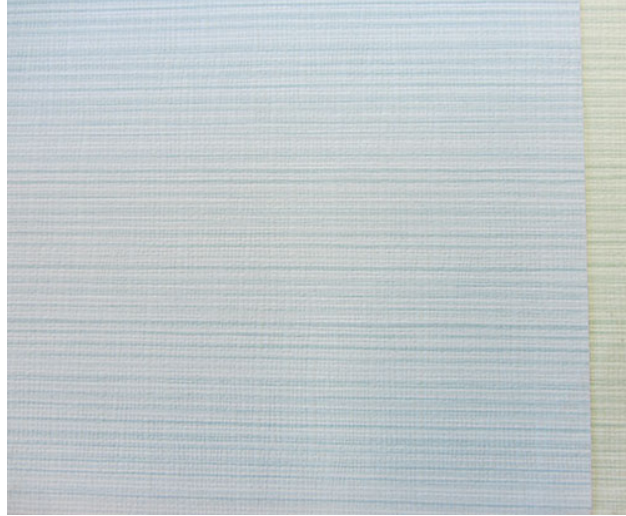


Figure 4.33. b17, Bauhaus Wallpaper Sample Book, 1931 (Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Gift of Josef Albers).

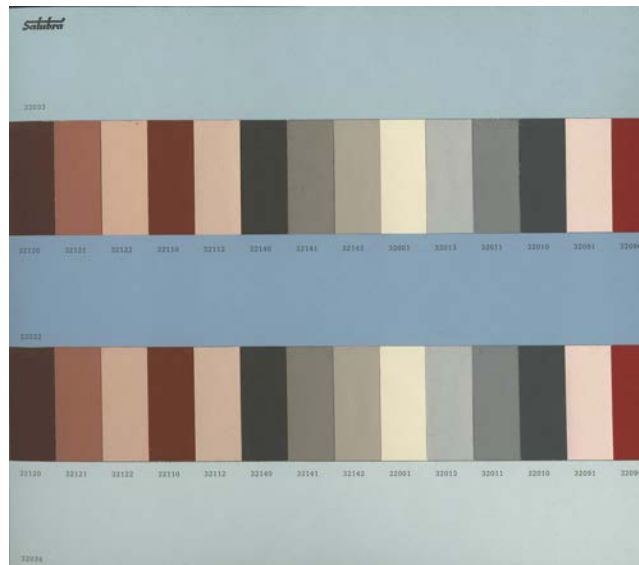


Figure 4.34. Le Corbusier and Salubra, Wallpaper Sample Book (Color Keyboard 2 – Sky), 1931 (Published in Rüegg, Arthur. *Polychromie Architecturale: Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959*. 2nd. rev. ed. 3 vols. Basel: Birkhäuser-Publishers for Architecture, 2006).



Figure 4.35. Le Corbusier and Salubra, Wallpaper Sample Book (Color Keyboard 9 – Scenery) with Viewfinder, 1931 (Published in Rüegg, Arthur. *Polychromie Architecturale: Color Keyboards from 1931 and 1959*. 2nd. rev. ed. 3 vols. Basel: Birkhäuser-Publishers for Architecture, 2006).



Figure 4.36. Rasch bringt die Bauhauskarte, Advertisement in *Deutsche Tapeten-Zeitung*, September 1, 1929.

DAS FRANKFURTER REGISTER 15
DIE BILLIGEN BAUHAUS-TAPETEN

Muster Nr. b 21. H.

MUSTER:
 Bauhaustapeten sind unzerföhrlich und zuröckhaltend gemastert. Die furchweg hellen Facöfene beruhen auf gemeinsamer Farbenwahl. Die Auswahl umfasst 150 Blatt Leinwandmuster, die in der blauen Bauhauskarte und 100 Blatt Öldrucktapeten, die in der gelben Karte enthalten sind. Beide Karten sind in Diefenmat a 5.

FARBEN:
 Die verwendeten Farben sind im handelsüblichen Sinne lichtecht (I. G. Farbenindustrie A.-G.). Allerdings erreichen die Tapeten der gelben Öldruckkarte nicht die Lichtbeständigkeit der Tapeten der blauen Karte, da es bisher nicht gelungen ist, Öldruckfarben in derselben Masse lichtecht herzustellen wie Leinwandfarben. Das Papier der Bauhaustapeten ist 85 g pro qm schwer und von bester Qualität.

PREISE:
 Der durchschnittliche Preis der Bauhaustapeten beträgt 1 Mark bis 1.50 Mark. Eine Ausnahme machen einige Muster, die etwas teurer, und zwei Muster, die etwas billiger sind. In dieser Sonderbeilage ist das Papier 110 Gramm beziehungsweise nur 70 Gramm schwer.

WO ERHÄLTЛИCH!
 In den besseren Spezial-Tapetengeschäften. Dasselbe Musterböcher.
 Muster Nr. b 19. E.

Muster Nr. b 4. J.

Hannoversche Tapetenfabrik Gebr. Rasch & Co., G. m. b. H., Bramsche b. Osnabrück

Beilage zu „Das Neue Frankfurt“ 1930, Heft 8, Verlag Engelhart und Schäffer, Frankfurt a. M.

Figure 4.39. Die Billigen Bauhaus-Tapeten (The Cheap Bauhaus Wallpaper), Advertisement in *Das Neue Frankfurt*, 1930.



Figure 4.40. Joost Schmidt, Cover of the Bauhaus Wallpaper Advertising Catalogue, *der bauhaustapete gehört die zukunft* (the future belongs to bauhaus wallpaper), 1931 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

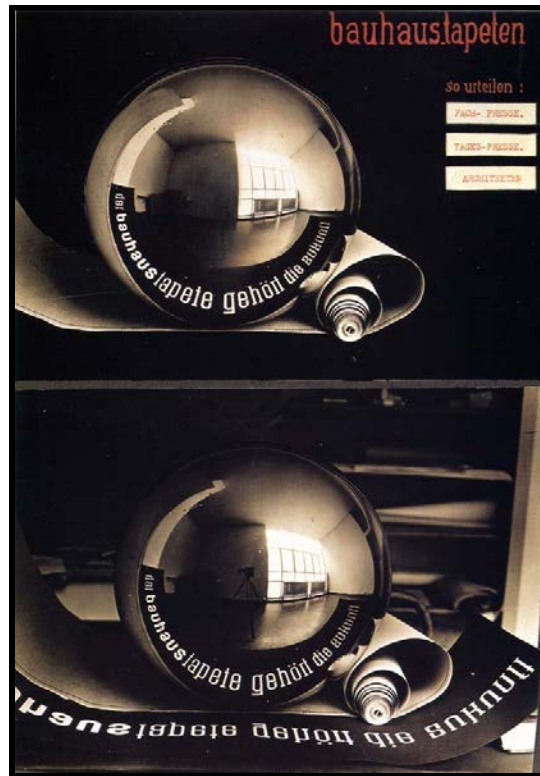


Figure 4.41. Joost Schmidt, Two Studies for the Cover of the Bauhaus Wallpaper Advertising Catalogue, *der bauhaustapete gehört die zukunft* (the future belongs to bauhaus wallpaper), 1931 (Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin).

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