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### Bauhaus

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bachhaus

# Overview (Staatliches) Bauhaus

- School of art, design and architecture in Germany
- Established in 1919 and closed down in 1933
- The Bauhaus contributed to the development of Functionalism
- Original Concept: To unify the arts
- Named “Bauhaus” referring to medieval *Bauhütten*
  - *Bauhütte*: Institution for apprenticeship and training of craftsman
- Departments: Ceramics, Weaving, Carpentry, Metal, Graphic Printing, Printing and Advertising, Photography, Glass, Wall-Painting, Stone/Wood Sculpture, Plastic Arts, Theater
- Teachers: Johannes Itten, Gerhard Marcks, Lyonel Feininger, Georg Muche, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, ...

# Social / Educational Circumstances before the Establishment

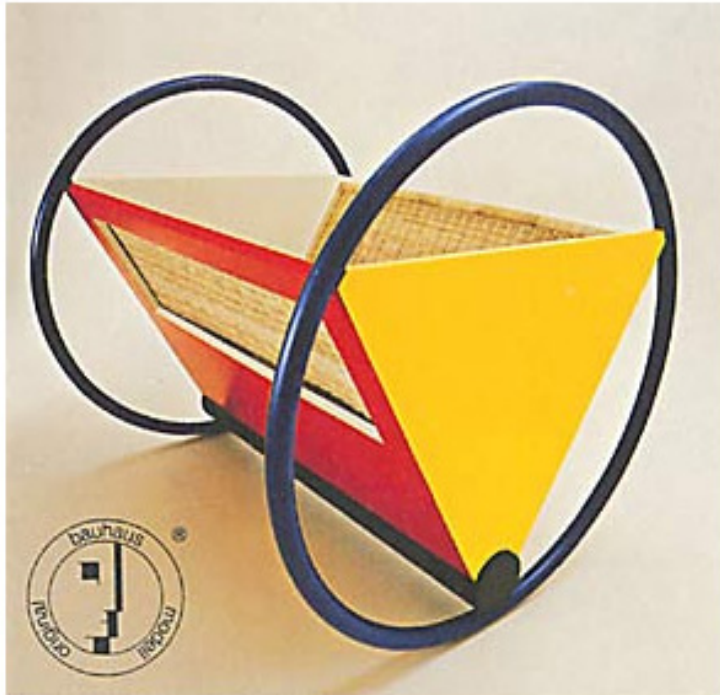
- Development in the area of human perception and aesthetic experience (von Helmholtz, Wundt, ...)
  - New foundation of the arts
  - Topic such as abstraction, form, color and geometric mediation needed to be redefined
- Reform in educational theories
  - Developing children's potential through learning by doing in a free and playful way with creative expressions
  - Pestalozzi, Montessori
- Argumentations for art education becoming a central aspect in life – even for non-artists (Lichtwark around 1880)



Bauhaus building Weimar

- Conflict between Itten and Gropius
  - Emphasis on autonomous artistic creation versus interest in socially committed design
- 1922: Move towards industrial design
  - “Technology does not need art, but art does need technology”
- 1923: Itten left – he couldn’t identify with the new change
- 1923: Moholy-Nagy replaced Itten – Functionalism started to play a role
- 1924: Bauhaus was exposed to political criticism - Funds were reduced after the exhibition and the victory of right-wing parties
- 1925: Bauhaus in Weimar closed





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# Dessau Period 1925 - 1928

- *Jungmeister* were able to teach own workshops
  - *Jungmeister*: studied themselves at the Bauhaus and are double qualified in arts and crafts
- Course names were changed to call attention to the industrial/modern form
  - “Painting department” became “Advertising department”
- Pottery was no longer part of the curriculum
- The new Bauhaus building was a milestone of Functionalism
- 1927: Establishing a department of architecture
- 1928: Gropius’ leadership came to an end





Bauhaus Dessau

new building by  
Walter Gropius



# Final Period 1928 - 1933

- 1928: New director: Meyer
- “Building and creating are indivisible and they are social occurrence”
- New shift from unified art school towards production to satisfy social needs
- Architecture is now the central element in the Bauhaus
- 1929: Department of Photography was established
- 1930: Van der Rohe is elected new director
- 1932: Bauhaus in Dessau was closed after the victory of the National Socialists
- The school moved to Berlin and became private
- 1933 Hitler put a final end to the Bauhaus
  - Vilified as culturally Bolshevik



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# Later influence



- After the closure of the Bauhaus due to the Nazi regime many artists and former teachers fled
- Major influence on art and architecture in Europe, The United States, Canada and Israel
- Tel Aviv is listed world heritage site for Bauhaus architecture (4.000 Buildings were built from 1933 on)
- Teaching approach that you learn the basic principles of color and theory first and then experiment with materials became a common method in many schools, not only architectural and design ones

# Teaching Ideas in the Bauhaus

- Six month (later: a year) preliminary course *Vorkurs* (basic knowledge and theories)
- Three-year courses *Formenlehre* (i.e. color seminar, analytical drawing) and *Werkslehre* (i.e. making furniture, painting, weaving room)
- Students went through the stages “apprentice”, “journeyman” and “master”
- Workshops were based on learning by doing
  - They aimed the development in technical, craft and design skills
  - Attempts to combine different arts in one work (unify the arts)
- Workshops were lead by each a “workshop master” (concerning basic design/theory) and a “master of form” (artist)

- Students should be doubly skilled and trained to be able of coping with the challenges of modernity in a creative way
- Paradox in Bauhaus pedagogy: Developing unimpeded expression through systematic discipline
- To foster perception and reproduction skills students should do exact and detailed drawings from human figures or materials



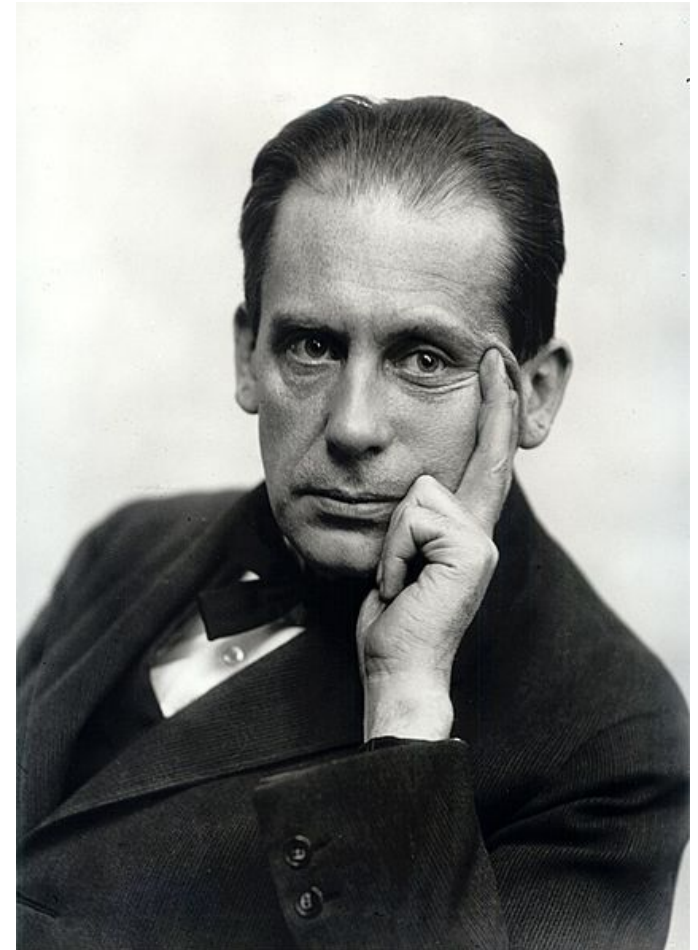
# Functionalism



- Form follows function
- Utilitarian structures without regarding classical elements such as symmetry or proportion
- No useless decoration just to make it pretty. Forms were stripped to their basics
- Beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Representatives are Gropius and Van der Rohe

# Walter Gropius

- May 18, 1883 – July 5, 1969
- German architect and founder of the Bauhaus school
- 1910: He had his own architecture practice
- He designed a concept for the *Kunstgewerbeschule* to establish a teaching institution that would work as a consultancy for industry, commerce and crafts
- He designed the Bauhaus building in Dessau
- He taught at Harvard from 1937 on





Can you find some  
differences but also similarities  
between  
the ideas of the Bauhaus  
and Academies or Guilds?

# Citations

- [http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T006947?q=bauhaus&search=quick&pos=1&\\_start=1#firsthit](http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T006947?q=bauhaus&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit)
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