

Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar

The Staatliche Bauhaus resulted from the merger of the former Grand-Ducal Saxon Academy of Art with the former Grand-Ducal Saxon School of Arts and Crafts in conjunction with a newly affiliated department of architecture.

Aims of the Bauhaus

The Bauhaus strives to bring together all creative effort into one whole, to reunify all the disciplines of practical art—sculpture, painting, handicrafts, and the crafts—as inseparable components of a new architecture. The ultimate, if distant, aim of the Bauhaus is the unified work of art—the great structure—in which there is no distinction between monumental and decorative art.

The Bauhaus wants to educate architects, painters, and sculptors of all levels, according to their capabilities, to become competent craftsmen or independent creative artists and to form a working community of leading and future artist-craftsmen. These men, of kindred spirit, will know how to design buildings harmoniously in their entirety—structure, finishing, ornamentation, and furnishing.

Principles of the Bauhaus

Art rises above all methods; in itself it cannot be taught, but the crafts certainly can be. Architects, painters, and sculptors are craftsmen in the true sense of the word; hence, a thorough training in the crafts, acquired in workshops and in experimental and practical sites, is required of all students as the indispensable basis for all artistic production. Our own workshops are to be gradually built up, and apprenticeship agreements with outside workshops will be concluded.

The school is the servant of the workshop, and will one day be absorbed in it. Therefore there will be no teachers or pupils in the Bauhaus but masters, journeymen, and apprentices.

The manner of teaching arises from the character of the workshop:

Organic forms developed from manual skills.

Avoidance of all rigidity; priority of creativity; freedom of individuality, but strict study discipline.

Master and journeyman examinations, according to the Guild Statutes, held before the Council of Masters of the Bauhaus or before outside masters.

Collaboration by the students in the work of the masters.

Securing of commissions, also for students.

Mutual planning of extensive, Utopian structural designs—public buildings and buildings for worship—aimed at the future. Collaboration of all masters and students—architects, painters, sculptors—on these designs with the object of gradually achieving a harmony of all the component elements and parts that make up architecture.

Constant contact with the leaders of the crafts and industries of the country. Contact with public life, with the people, through exhibitions and other activities.

New research into the nature of the exhibitions, to solve the problem of displaying visual work and sculpture within the framework of architecture.

Encouragement of friendly relations between masters and students outside of work; therefore plays, lectures, poetry, music, costume parties. Establishment of a cheerful ceremonial at these gatherings.

Range of Instruction

Instruction at the Bauhaus includes all practical and scientific areas of creative work.

A. Architecture,

B. Painting,

C. Sculpture

including all branches of the crafts.

Students are trained in a craft (1) as well as in drawing and painting (2) and science and theory (3).

1. Craft training—either in our own, gradually enlarging workshops or in outside workshops to which the student is bound by apprenticeship agreement—includes:

- a) sculptors, stonemasons, stucco workers, woodcarvers, ceramic workers, plaster casters,
- b) blacksmiths, locksmiths, founders, metal turners,
- c) cabinetmakers,
- d) painter-and-decorators, glass painters, mosaic workers, enamellers,
- e) etchers, wood engravers, lithographers, art printers, engravers,
- f) weavers.

Craft training forms the basis of all teaching at the Bauhaus. Every student must learn a craft.

2. Training in drawing and painting includes:

- a) free-hand sketching from memory and imagination,
- b) drawing and painting of heads, live models, and animals,
- c) drawing and painting of landscapes, figures, plants, and still lifes,
- d) composition,
- e) execution of murals, panel pictures, and religious shrines,
- f) design of ornaments,
- g) lettering,
- h) construction and projection drawing,
- i) design of exteriors, gardens, and interiors,
- j) design of furniture and practical articles.

3. Training in science and theory includes:

- a) art history—not presented in the sense of a history of styles, but rather to further active understanding of historical working methods and techniques,

- c) anatomy—from the living model,
- d) physical and chemical theory of color,
- e) rational painting methods,
- f) basic concepts of bookkeeping, contract negotiations, personnel,
- g) individual lectures on subjects of general interest in all areas of art and science.

Divisions of Instruction

The training is divided into three courses of instruction:

- I. course for apprentices,
- II. course for journeymen,
- III. course for junior masters.

The instruction of the individual is left to the discretion of each master within the framework of the general program and the work schedule, which is revised every semester. In order to give the students as versatile and comprehensive a technical and artistic training as possible, the work schedule will be so arranged that every architect, painter, and sculptor-to-be is able to participate in part of the other courses.

Admission

Any person of good repute, without regard to age or sex, whose previous education is deemed adequate by the Council of Masters, will be admitted, as far as space permits. The tuition fee is 180 marks per year (It will gradually disappear entirely with increasing earnings of the Bauhaus). A nonrecurring admission fee of 20 marks is also to be paid. Foreign students pay double fees. Address inquiries to the Secretariat of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar.

April 1919.

The administration of the

Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar:

Walter Gropius.

Oberhofmarschall (retired) Baron von Fritsch

Letter of April 20, 1920 to the Hofmarschallamt in Weimar

Explanation of the appointment of Walter Gropius to the former Grand-Ducal Academy of Art.

LW, Hofmarschallamt files 3708, Title LVIII No. 1, 1919—1922, pp. 12 ff.

The cause for this explanation was a slander campaign launched by nationalist circles and friends of the old academy professors against Gropius, which attempted to cast doubts on the legality of his appointment to Weimar and the founding of the Bauhaus. Gropius himself commented several times on this matter in the newspaper "Deutschland," which then published Fritsch's explanation.

At the beginning of the year 1919 Professor Thedy, who at that time was deputy Director of the Academy of Art, came to see me and submitted the request that architect Gropius be appointed Director of the academy. This request represented a unanimous decision of the entire faculty of the academy. A few days later, Professors Engelmann and Klemm appeared at the Hofmarschallamt to confirm that it was the unanimous wish of the faculty of the academy to have Gropius appointed as Director. I turned, in writing, to his Excellency von Bode in Berlin and asked him whether in his opinion it would be advisable to appoint an architect as head of the academy and whether Gropius would be qualified for the position. Excellency von Bode replied that it was quite admissible to appoint an architect as Director of the Academy of Art; that lately the idea of putting a nonpainter at the head of an academy for painting had been variously considered and held desirable, and that he, Excellency von Bode, after having spoken to Herr Gropius about this matter and having seen his works, could recommend him as qualified for the position.

But in a letter of January 13, 1920, Excellency von Bode expressed his opinion as follows: "After what I have read in the newspapers about the goings-on at the Bauhaus, your Excellency must have received quite a strange idea about my own conception of art and about my conscientiousness in giving information. I am absolutely appalled, and at the time of the first appointment by Gropius—of the cubist Feininger—I expressed my astonishment to him. Gropius had presented me with a program that to me appeared a little radical but was quite acceptable in its essential points. He elucidated it verbally, to the effect that he was primarily concerned, as I am, with the reestablishment of the crafts; that he intended first to enlist only competent craftsmen and to train young people thoroughly in the crafts for some years—fine art would have to come later! And then he started right off with the appointment of Feininger!"

The appointment of Herr Gropius was then concluded by the Hofmarschallamt, after I had obtained the approval of the chairman of the then provisional government, Herr Baudert. His Royal Highness, the Grand Duke, had not been given notice of the intended appointment of Herr Gropius. The negotiations with Herr Gropius were carried on verbally in Weimar. He was often in Weimar personally and also conferred directly with Herr Baudert. Herr Gropius was appointed Director of the Academy of Art. The fact that the contract of employment also mentions his appointment as Director of the former Grand-Ducal School of Arts and Crafts is wrong in that this institution no longer existed at that time. In § 5 of the employment contract it is explicitly stated that Gropius submit to the existing statutes and regulations of the Academy of Art and to those perhaps yet to be issued with his cooperation. As long as I directed the business of the Hofmarschallamt, there were no changes made in the statutes.

Approval for the change of name of the academy to Staatliche Bauhaus was granted by the government without consulting the opinion of the Hofmarschallamt. I mentioned to Herr Gropius that I considered the term Staatliche Bauhaus unsuitable.

Because of the employment of Herr Gropius as Director of the Academy of Art, it was naturally impossible, and not desirable, to change the legal relationships that existed between the House of the Grand Duke and the institute, especially those with respect to funds available for purposes of the institute: the academy fund (apparently also called disposition fund); the art expansion fund; and the fund established at the time of the dissolution of the School of Arts and Crafts. But the establishment of new stipulations on this matter must be reserved for the negotiations whose subject is the dispute between the Grand-Ducal House and the State, as has already been explicitly provided for in the declaration of June 26, 1919 on the compensation conditions.

Neubabelsberg, April 20, 1920

Baron von Fritsch