

BAUHAUS 100

THE PRINT
PORTFOLIOS



BAUHAUS 100 – RETHINKING THE WORLD

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus, an art and design school in Germany, whose ideas remain influential to this day. To celebrate, the National Gallery of Ireland has borrowed four Bauhaus print portfolios from the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.

The brief history of the Bauhaus spans just 14 years and straddles three cities, from its foundation on 1 April 1919 in Weimar, its relocation to Dessau in 1925, to its final move to Berlin where the Nazis forced its closure in 1933. Its teachings sought to unite art and production, and each architect-director of the school – Walter Gropius (1919–28), Hannes Meyer (1928–30), and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1930–33) – espoused different philosophies.

The Bauhaus rose from the chaotic aftermath of the First World War. Like many who had experienced the horrors of the Great War, Gropius, who had served as an officer, wished to start anew. He held utopian ideals about remaking the world and changing society for the better. With its artistic radicalism, social activism and bohemian attitude, the Bauhaus became a symbol of a progressive age and a byword for modernity in design.

From the start, Gropius promoted intellectual freedom at the school. The acclaimed visual artists he appointed as professors included Johannes Itten, Georg Muche, Lyonel Feininger, Gerhard Marcks, Paul Klee, Lothar Schreyer, Oskar Schlemmer and Wassily Kandinsky. Not one member of this all-male teaching faculty had taught at an academy before.

BAUHAUS MANIFESTO

Gropius's ambitious manifesto of 1919, for anti-academic art-school reform, read: 'to create a new guild of craftsmen without the class distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsmen and artist!' The school attracted both established artists and craftsmen to its staff, many of whom came from military service, hoping to make a fresh start, along with over 1,250 students from 29 countries.

The Bauhaus instigated a new symbiosis of art, craft and industry. Gropius advocated a 'new unity,' first of arts and crafts, and later of art and technology. 'Let us create the new building of the future together,' he said. 'It will combine architecture, sculpture, and painting in a single form.' His ambition was to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total artwork. '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,' he proclaimed. 'The ultimate aim of all artistic activity is building!'

Gropius wished to establish 'a community of kindred spirits', a 'Republic of Intellectuals'. He coined the term Bauhaus, from the simple words *bau* (building) and *haus* (house). He aspired to create a guild or fraternity that would work together to build a new society. His Bauhaus was essentially a ground-breaking school of arts and crafts, as a department of architecture only existed from 1927, the last year of his directorship.

BAUHAUS WORKSHOPS

The Bauhaus was a campus (unusual in Germany), where students and teachers lived in a cosmopolitan environment. Students began their studies with a preliminary course, a trial semester where their skills were tested, and the foundations of craftsmanship and design were taught. They then entered the workshops (the core training at the Bauhaus), first becoming apprentices, then journeymen and finally young masters.

Bauhaus teachers were divided into *Formmeister* (Masters of Form), who were charged with aesthetic and creative direction, and *Handwerksmeister* (Masters of Craft), who were responsible for craftsmanship and technical matters. Each discipline had its own workshop: ceramic, weaving, carpentry, metal, printed graphics, stage, glass and wall painting. Later, in Dessau, workshops for photography and advertising were added.

Women accounted for nearly half of the student applicants in the early Weimar period. At the Bauhaus weaving was deemed a 'women's class', hence only women students were assigned to the weaving workshop, and, in later years, to interior design. An exception was Marianne Brandt, who designed light fixtures, ashtrays and coffee and tea sets in the male domain of the metal workshop.

In 1923, the Bauhaus opened its doors to industrial production, designing prototypes instead of unique objects. Though dedicated to learning, the workshops, referred to as 'laboratories for industry' by Gropius, were also expected to generate income for the school. The most successful and lucrative product to come out of the workshops was Bauhaus wallpaper, first marketed in 1930.



Paul Klee (1879–1940)
Hoffmannesque Scene, 1921
(detail)

THE BAUHAUS PORTFOLIOS PROJECT – NEW EUROPEAN GRAPHICS

When the Bauhaus opened in 1919, the printing workshop was the first fully operational department, having acquired equipment from the former School of Art in Weimar. From 1921, the artist Lyonel Feininger, as Master of Form, led the printing workshop with the lithographer Carl Zaubitzer, the Master of Craft. The workshop was a training ground for apprentices and an experimental domain for staff and students alike. However, between 1921 and 1924, it also produced series of portfolios of prints for sale.¹

The most ambitious project undertaken by the printing workshop was the five-portfolio set of prints by international artists entitled *Neue europäische Graphik* (New European Graphics), printed between 1922 and 1924 and distributed by Müller & Co. Verlag, Potsdam. Overseen by Feininger, the portfolios were sold by subscription to raise awareness about the Bauhaus and to provide additional revenue for operating the school.

Gropius petitioned artists to donate original prints. Many of the artists he selected were associated with Herwarth Walden's Berlin gallery *Der Sturm* (The Storm), which, before the war, was a meeting place for the international avant-garde and the focal point for Expressionism. Gropius's intention through these portfolios was to produce 'a document which will demonstrate how the artistic generation of our time shares the ideas of the Bauhaus...'² As a declaration of solidarity, an extensive network of significant European avant-garde artists rallied around the Bauhaus banner with this project.

By and large, the impressions were printed by students in the printing workshop, which gave them first-hand exposure to the work of a wide range of prominent German and international artists. The portfolio covers were designed by Feininger, Klee, Hirschfeld-Mack and Albers, and produced in the bookbinding workshop, headed by Klee.³ Transfer papers were mostly used for prints coming from outside Germany, as to send heavy lithographic stones long distances and across borders meant considerable costs and risks.⁴

The published portfolios comprised 52 prints by 45 artists, many of whom were renowned painters involved in Abstraction, Futurism and Expressionism. Portfolio I: 'Masters of the State Bauhaus in Weimar', contained 14 prints by Bauhaus teachers including Itten, Feininger (fig.1), Klee (fig.2), Marcks, Muche, Schreyer and Schlemmer. Portfolio III: 'German Artists', comprised 14 black and white prints by Baumeister, Macke, Marc (fig.3), Schwitters (fig.4), and others. The works by Marc and Macke in this portfolio were posthumously printed by the Bauhaus. Portfolio IV: 'Italian and Russian Artists', amounted to 11 prints by Boccioni, Carrà, Severini, Goncharova (fig.5), Jawlensky and Kandinsky (appointed to the Bauhaus faculty in June 1922) (fig.6). Finally, Portfolio V: 'German Artists', consisted of 13 prints by well-known artists, who had no direct affiliation with the school, including Beckmann, Grosz, Kirchner, Kokoschka, Pechstein (fig.7) and Rohlf's (fig.8). The outcome of Portfolio II, which was to feature the work of French artists, will be discussed later.

The project was beset with difficulties. Some invited artists did not submit their work on time. The ongoing political turmoil in Germany, and organisational deficiencies within the Bauhaus itself, also hindered progress.⁵ Unfortunately, Germany's calamitous inflation devoured any anticipated profits from the sale of these portfolios. Even production costs were not covered by the income generated. By the end of 1923, when the German currency eventually stabilised, the market for lavish print publications had collapsed.⁶ All the remaining stock of the Bauhaus portfolios had to be sold off at cut prices. Although not all the anticipated portfolios were produced, those that were represent the 'most diverse publishing venture in the field of original printmaking in Germany during the post-First World War period.'⁷ The four Bauhaus portfolios, on loan to the National Gallery of Ireland from the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, were bequeathed by Annemarie Grohmann in 1970.

THE POLITICAL THREAT

The internationalism of the German avant-garde, so central to the Bauhaus concept and promoted through these portfolios, was something that extreme right-wing conservatives despised. In July 1924, the Association for the Protection of German Culture in Thuringia condemned the Bauhaus, writing: 'Our healthy instinct tells us that truly authentic art cannot consist of colour-composition alone, or of the filling-in of flat areas, or technical construction ... Such a bloodless diseased artistic instinct ... as that ... at the Bauhaus ... is assisting the collapse of our culture.'⁸

Portfolio II, of the *New European Graphics*, which was to include the work of living French artists, remained incomplete and was never published. Editions of the plates received by the Bauhaus from Coubine, Léger, Marcoussis and Survage were printed. However, the letters Gropius intended to send in September 1924 to those other French artists who had expressed an interest in contributing, such as Laurencin, Lhote and Picabia, were never sent.⁹ This portfolio was a casualty of Franco-German tensions at the time, and the newly elected right-wing government of Thuringia, which slashed the Bauhaus budget by half and cancelled the teachers' contracts in March 1925.¹⁰



Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956)
Villa on the Shore, c. 1918
(detail)

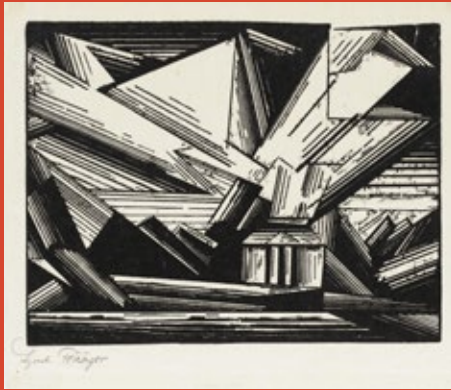


fig.1 Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956), *Villa on the Shore*, c. 1918. Woodcut. "New European Graphics, Portfolio I: Masters of the State Bauhaus, Weimar"



fig.2 Paul Klee (1879–1940), *Hoffmannesque Scene*, 1921. Colour lithograph. "New European Graphics, Portfolio I: Masters of the State Bauhaus, Weimar"



fig.3 Franz Marc (1880–1916), *Creation I*, 1914. Woodcut. "New European Graphics, Portfolio III: German Artists"



fig.4 Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), *Composition with Head in Left Profile*, 1921. Lithograph. "New European Graphics, Portfolio III: German Artists"

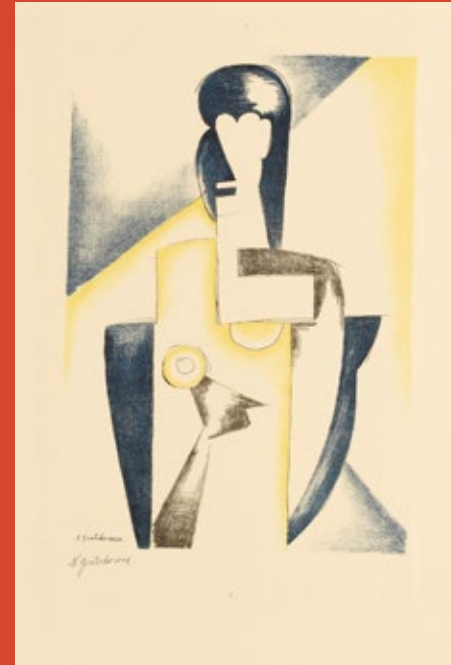


fig.5 Natalia Goncharova (1881–1962), *Female Half Figure*, 1922/23. Colour lithograph. "New European Graphics, Portfolio IV: Italian and Russian Artists"



fig.6 Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), *Composition*, 1922. Colour lithograph. "New European Graphics, Portfolio IV: Italian and Russian Artists"

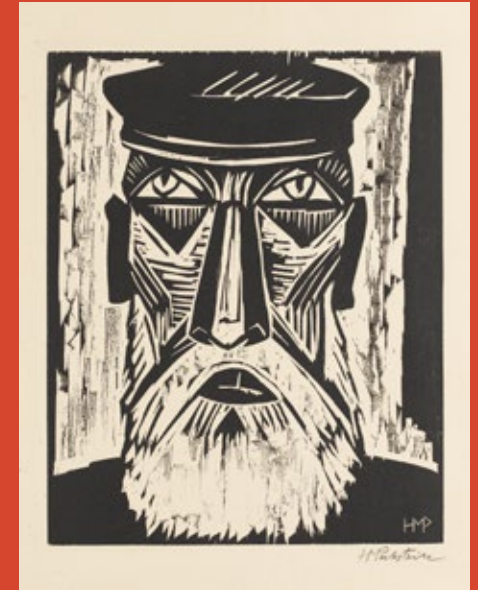


fig.7 Max Pechstein (1881–1955), *Head of a Bearded Fisherman*, 1922. Woodcut. "New European Graphics, Portfolio V: German Artists"

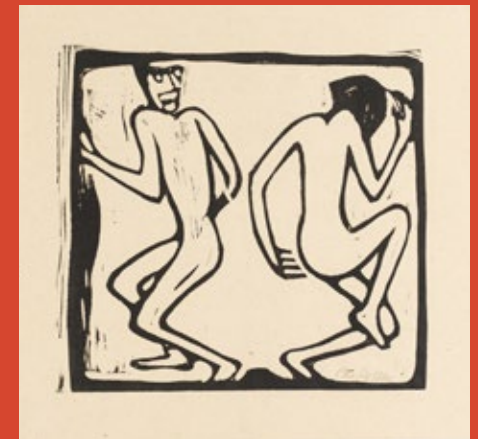


fig.8 Christian Rohlfis (1849–1938), *Two Dancers*, c. 1913. Linocut. "New European Graphics, Portfolio V: German Artists"

THE BAUHAUS LEGACY

Such political pressure prompted Gropius and the masters to resign and dissolve the Bauhaus in Weimar. In 1925, the Bauhaus moved to the industrial city of Dessau, into a building designed by Gropius. The graphic print workshop was replaced by the printing and advertising workshop, which under the directorship of Herbert Bayer abandoned original printmaking in favour of typography and graphic design.

The National Socialists pilloried the Bauhaus as 'internationalist' and 'Jewish'. Hannes Meyer, the second director of the Bauhaus, led with the slogan: 'The people's needs instead of the need for luxury!' A committed Communist, he was derided by the National Socialists as a 'cultural Bolshevik' and dismissed from his role by the city of Dessau due to his 'Communist machinations'. Nazi repression, and drastic cutbacks in funding, caused Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the school's last director, to reopen the Bauhaus as a private institution in an old telephone factory in Berlin. He was forced to shut the beleaguered Bauhaus in 1933, when the Nazis seized total power across Germany.

A disastrous period ensued. All pioneering teachers were dismissed from their art academy posts, and vilified artists had their work displayed in the *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibition of 1937, shown first in Munich and then elsewhere in Germany. Many artists who contributed to the Bauhaus portfolios fell victim to Nazi persecution.


Ironically, the demise of the Bauhaus ensured its international legacy, with many displaced Bauhaus masters finding refuge in the United States. László Moholy-Nagy founded the New Bauhaus in Chicago in 1937; Gropius became a Harvard professor; Josef and Anni Albers taught at Black Mountain College in North Carolina; and Mies van der Rohe designed the Illinois Institute of Technology campus and taught there.

The legacy of the Bauhaus is profound, from the White City of Tel Aviv, built in the International Style, to the Chicago skyline. Combining functionality with streamlined beauty, Bauhaus design has contributed much to the aesthetic of our contemporary world, visible in housing estates, prefabricated furniture and typefaces. Iconic pieces like Marcel Breuer's tubular steel furniture and ergonomic slatted chairs, or Anni Albers and Gunta Stölzl's geometric textiles, continue to inspire generations of young designers.

The influence of the Bauhaus movement, felt across the fine arts, architecture, theatre, applied arts and graphic design, make it one of the twentieth century's most important educational institutions. To this day, the Bauhaus continues to have a lasting impact on architecture and design teaching, attesting to Mies van der Rohe's observation that 'only an idea has the power to spread so widely'.

The Bauhaus was an international workshop for innovative ideas, where diverse opinions, theories and styles merged in the pursuit of the New Man, New Architecture and New Living, therefore no one consistent Bauhaus style can be said to exist. The revolution it instigated in art education, together with its goal of reshaping modern life, turned the Bauhaus into a cultural phenomenon, one which is still very much present in our built and material environment. The centenary celebrations, taking place worldwide, affirm the continued significance of this visionary school.

- 1 Important portfolios of graphic art produced by the Bauhaus masters included Feininger's *Twelve Wood Cuts* (1920/21); Muche's *Ypsilon* (1921); and Kandinsky's *Small Worlds* (1922). For additional income the workshop also printed work from artists outside the Bauhaus.
- 2 Frances Carey and Antony Griffiths, *The Print in Germany 1880-1933*, London, 1984, p.25.
- 3 Covers designed by: Portfolio I: Lyonel Feininger; Portfolio III: Paul Klee or Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack (various opinions); Portfolio IV: Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack; Portfolio V: Josef Albers. Bookbinding for all: Otto Dorfner and workshop.
- 4 Hans M. Wingler, *Die Mappenwerke 'Neue europäische Graphik'; (Die künstlerische Graphik des Bauhauses)*, Florian Kupferberg, 1965, p.17.
- 5 Herzogenrath, Wulf, *Bauhaus: a publication by the institut für auslandsbeziehungen Stuttgart: on the occasion of the exhibition in the Douglas Hyde Gallery Trinity College Dublin / presented in association with the Goethe Institute (March 7-30, 1979)*, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen Stuttgart, 1975, p.232.
- 6 Op.cit.no.ii, p.25.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Op.cit.no.ii, pp.26-7.
- 9 Op.cit.no.iv, pp.18-9
- 10 Op.cit.no.v, p.232.



Max Pechstein (1881-1955),
Head of a Bearded Fisherman,
1922 (detail)

BAUHAUS 100: THE PRINT PORTFOLIOS EDUCATION, LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

To support *Bauhaus 100*, we have devised a programme which considers the origin of the school, the exhibition itself, and the legacy and reach of the Bauhaus today. These topics inform each and every activity and provide an opportunity for all ages and abilities to connect with this incredible institution, which came to define an era, an aesthetic and had a profound influence on art, design and architecture.

FREE PUBLIC TALKS, LECTURES, SCREENINGS & DROP-IN SESSIONS

Niamh MacNally will deliver a live-subtitled introductory **Curator's Talk** on **24 July** at **13.15** in the Lecture Theatre.

Engaging, conversation-based **Pop-Up Talks** will take place at **13.15–13.45** in the Print Gallery, focusing on six key works in the exhibition: **26 July | 9 August | 6 September | 11 & 25 October | 8 November**

The **Sunday Family Drop-In Sessions** take place from **11.30–13.30** each week. They promote creative development and intergenerational learning. Facilitators Shelby Todd and Edel Campbell will link to specific Bauhaus themes on: **21 July | 10 November**



Our Talks and screenings are presented in co-operation with the Goethe-Institut Irland

Our **FREE Sunday Series** of Film Screenings at **12.30–13.30** and Lectures at **15.00** take place in the Gallery Lecture Theatre and will explore various aspects of the inspirational school and the legacy of its artists.

6 October |

Screening: *Mies van der Rohe's*

***Neue Nationalgalerie* |**

Lecture: *From the Local to the*

Transnational: Situating the Bauhaus

Prof. Kathleen James Chakraborty, School of Art History and Cultural Policy, University College Dublin

13 October |

Screening: *Bauhaus Model and Myth* |

Lecture: *Women of the Bauhaus*

Sara Donaldson, Art and Fashion Historian

20 October |

Screening: *Stage and Dance* |

Lecture: *Production/Reproduction:*

Photography at the Bauhaus

Dr Sabine Kriebel, Lecturer, Department of History of Art, University College Cork

3 November |

Screening: *Mies van der Rohe's*

***Villa in Brno, Haus Tugendhat* |**

Lecture: *Dessau Berlin Chicago –*

Mies van der Rohe and the Bauhaus

Jan Frohburg, Lecturer, School of Architecture, University of Limerick

10 November |

Screening: *Bauhaus Spirit –*

***100 Years of Bauhaus* |**

Lecture: *From Bauhaus to Black*

Mountain College: The Influence

of the Bauhaus on American Art

Jennie Taylor, Education Department, National Gallery of Ireland

SPECIAL TICKETED EVENTS

**FOR CHILDREN AGED 4–10 YEARS
WHO STRUGGLE WITH THEIR SENSORY
ENVIRONMENT | Sensory-friendly
Workshops | 29, 30, 31 July | 14.00–15.00 |**

(FREE–Booking Essential)

These workshops engage with all the senses and take place in the calm surroundings of the Print Gallery – home to the *Bauhaus 100* exhibition.

**FOR ADULTS AND STUDENTS: Talk & Tea |
10 September | 11.00 | €5**

Conversational illustrated talk followed by tea and a chat with curator Niamh MacNally

FOR ADULTS: *People on Sunday*

26 September | 18.00 | €20 | Shaw Room

A screening of German silent drama film *People on Sunday* accompanied by live music (duration 70 mins)

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-25:

NowHaus! | 5 October | 14.00–16.00 |

€5 (booking opens September)

Creative career inspiration event:

Bauhaus edition

**FOR BABIES AND THEIR CARERS: *Bauhaus
Colours and Shapes* | 21 October | 12.00**

& 14.00 | €8 (Booking opens 9.00 15 October)

With artist Edel Campbell

**FOR CHILDREN AGED 8+: *Rethink
the World Mid-Term Break Course* |**

29 October–1 November | 14.00–16.00 |

€50 (places limited)

This is a dynamic art course in the use and reuse of selected materials led by artist Tanad Williams, informed by the teachings of the Bauhaus!

FOR ADULTS: Thursday Evening Lecture |

7 November | 18.30 | €10/€5 Students

Bauhaus and the Modern Metropolis

Dr Regina Bittner, Head of the Bauhaus Academy Foundation, Dessau

FOR ALL: *The New Bauhaus* |

28 November | 18.30 | €5

First Irish screening of this fascinating new independent feature documentary on the life and work of László Moholy-Nagy, and the school he founded – The New Bauhaus (later called the Institute of Design) in Chicago.

TEACHERS & SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Our dedicated schools programme for the exhibition *Bauhaus 100* will emphasise exploring, experimenting and experiencing! The programme includes special **Interactive Tours** of the exhibition tailored to the curriculum and a teachers' resource of practical exercises and activities inspired by Bauhaus teaching methodologies.

**To find out more visit
nationalgallery.ie/schools**

SPECIAL PROJECT: BAUHAUS 100 & ART IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

To celebrate the centenary of the Bauhaus, we are delighted to collaborate with the National College of Art and Design Postgraduate Masters Programme, *Art in the Contemporary World*. Writer, editor and researcher, Nathan O'Donnell will work with the Education Team to support students in conducting in-depth research, using literary and discursive responses, to consider the Bauhaus through a contemporary lens.

**To find out more E: jtaylor@ngi.ie
or visit www.acw.ie**

Bauhaus 100 – The Print Portfolios

20 July – 1 December 2019, Print Gallery, Admission Free

This exhibition is organised in collaboration with the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

Kindly supported by: Friends of the National Gallery of Ireland

Curator: Niamh MacNally

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 Staatsgalerie

Events Booking Information:

W: nationalgallery.ie

T: +353 1 663 3518 or pop into the Gallery Exhibition Desk

Tickets for all events may be booked online at nationalgallery.ie or at the Gallery's Exhibition Desk. For detailed info visit Gallery website.

A discount of 10% for Students/OAPs and 20% for Friends applies to all ticketed events, excluding private guided tours and the screening of *People on Sunday*

Education Contact Information:

E: education@ngi.ie

T: +353 1 663 3582

W: nationalgallery.ie/education

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Fig.1 ©Estate of Lyonel Feininger, VG Bild-Kunst
Bonn/ IVARO Dublin, 2019.

Fig.5 ©Estate of Natalia Goncharova, ADAGP Paris/
IVARO Dublin, 2019.

Fig.7 ©Pechstein Hamburg/Toekendorf, VG Bild-
Kunst Bonn/IVARO Dublin, 2019.