

anno VI – n. 11/12 **La trincea delle arti**

Il disagio della ragione: le eredità del Bauhaus

Marco Rinaldi

// abstract

The Discomfort of Reason: the Bauhaus Legacy

The dominant idea of a rationalist ideology pursued by the Bauhaus has actually overshadowed the different souls that composed it and that somehow sowed the seeds, sometimes fruitful sometimes sterile, of its legacy.

Among the experiences that refer to the Bauhaus, some have simply and somewhat naively repropounded a formalism that has sanctified its myth, translated into the concepts of Good Design and Gute Form that reflected the initial events of László Moholy-Nagy's New Bauhaus in Chicago and Max Bill's Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm. The other American school, under the direction of another Bauhaus veteran, Josef Albers, was the Black Mountain College, where instead of the Bauhaus experience, updating its myth, the democratic pedagogy and interdisciplinary approach were taken up and translated into continuous experimentation: from here a new generation of artists would emerge and here the first performance event would be born, which would revolutionise contemporary artistic practice, but which perhaps Oskar Schlemmer's theatrical work within the Bauhaus already contained in potential. And in Ulm it will be Tomás Maldonado who will update the rational Bauhaus myth by extending the project to the level of communication. There is also another fertile seed, the political one, which will bear fruit in another part of the world, Palestine, where the Zionist project to build the new state of Israel will embrace the rationalist utopia of creating a new world through architecture, a project that will be entrusted to some of the Jewish refugees from the Bauhaus diaspora, who will go to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean to build houses and kibbutzim. Finally, there is a final, more hidden plan, perhaps, that which derives from the

teaching of Paul Klee, who not only translated his limpid considerations on art into theoretical writings, but also transmitted an approach to form that went beyond the life of the school itself and often translated itself into pure lyricism.

Il Vorkurs: principi pedagogici

Giuseppe Furlanis

// abstract

The Vorkurs: pedagogical principles

The conviction that it was necessary a new development of artistic training that was able to incorporate the different ways and multiple languages of aesthetic experience has characterized the Bauhaus teaching method. Its pedagogical approach, in which was questioned the idealistic aspect of art, aimed at restoring the complexity of creativity action using the project primacy. Although there have been many pedagogical innovations introduced by Bauhaus, the one that most uniquely marked the teaching was definitely setting the preliminary course, the progenitor of Design foundation courses.

The Vorkurs, to develop necessary project basic common knowledge and skills, was intended to release the young students from any kind of assumption and to dispose their mind to the research and the experimentation, in this way they would be the protagonists of a cultural change rather than a professional one.

Oskar Schlemmer e il Balletto triadico

Francesca Falcone

// abstract

Oskar Schlemmer and the Triadic Ballet

The essay investigates fundamental aspects that linked the German painter Oskar Schlemmer to dance by means of a quick look at the Triadisches Ballett [Triadic Ballet, Stuttgart 30 September 1922], his most celebrated dance creation. According to the painter, it is only movement that promotes the encounter on the stage between space and the dancer's body. The fundamental tool of this creative interaction is the stage costume, whose function is to generate a figure, to manifest the way in which the body fills the space, to create the place inhabited by the dancer.

While investigating through dancing the ways in which the painter's sensibility could be physically perceived to reveal the motivation that leads him to create an exquisitely visual art product, Schlemmer only marginally took part in the official dance circles of his time.

The essay, therefore, sheds light also on the relationship between Schlemmer and the main exponents of dance of his time. If on one hand Schlemmer resorts to an improvisational inspiration that is clearly Dadaistic, on the other hand he remains faithful to the organization of pre-ordained structures of formal and visual composition, not sharing certain intellectual elaborations of modern dance. For the different versions of the Triadisches Ballett, Schlemmer prefers mostly classical ballet dancers able [in the case of female performers] to dance with the pointe shoes, an instrument that helps reduce freedom of movement to its essentiality, removing any superstructure, reducing it to vectors and lines, both straight and curved. In this way he fully achieves the goal of abstraction, a concept that emerges, according to Schlemmer, as a distinctive feature of «German ballet ... anchored in a national style». The essay ends with a brief analysis of the Triadisches Ballett in the reconstructions of Margaret Hasting [1970] and Gerard Bohner [1989].

Le 'ragazze' del Bauhaus: qualche prima riflessione

Anty Pansera

// abstract

Bauhaus "Girls": some first reflections

The beginning of a thought process, on that 2019 was celebrated the centenary of the founding of Bauhaus: on the side of the "girls" that attended it and influenced it quite a lot, with their presence, a community that, in just fourteen years, has given a distinctive imprinting, and so far to the culture of the project. A first reflection that brings to light how a flexible intelligence characterized them, whether they have been able to adapt to various circumstances of life, or they used their expertise with creative versatility. Autonomous "Girls", in the context of those 1920s, emancipated, able to marry and to divorce from their fellow students, they especially attended the weaving workshop, in which debates and contestation were the liveliest, but the school has gathered the largest gains. German and more, more than 14% of them were Jewish: some of them were murdered in concentration camps, some other were forced into exile for their left-wing activism.

Arte, scienza, pedagogia, politica. Tomás Maldonado e le attualità del Bauhaus

Raimonda Riccini

// abstract

Art, science, education, politics. Tomás Maldonado and Bauhaus' contemporary legacy

The text tries to figure out if and how the most notorious and studied design School of the 20th century is still speaking to the world today. The Bauhaus isn't described as a monolithic experience, showed through the splendor of its artworks and the theories of its teachers, its objects and images that have helped to fix in our culture the idea of Modern, rather as an adventure crossed by multiple identities, ferments, knowledges, politics and personalities that have made it contradictory, spurious, conflicting like every great human experience. In a special way this multiplicity was recounted through the analysis of the Bauhaus proposed by Tomás Maldonado, witness and active protagonist of the Bauhaus' inheritance, sifted and outdated in the didactic project of the School of Ulm. The result is the valuing an approach that reads into the link between art and project as a place in which commit to hand over the aesthetic experience to the daily experience, through the method and the scientific dimension. Which means a place of political commitment.

Una mostra e una biblioteca. Grafica e avanguardie. I Bauhausbücher

Luciana Gunetti

// abstract

An exhibition and a library: "Graphic design and avant-garde. The Bauhausbücher"

The paper hopes to examine the key graphic and editorial Bauhausbücher's experience, real educational tools, high-quality editorial and graphic: a whole new manuals, a brand new editorial production made from authors that until that time were architects, artists and artisans. In his quest to collectivize Bauhaus' teaching method Walter Gropius was a great curator-director, he understood that the teaching development has to go in László Moholy-Nagy's direction towards the movement arts [from photography to cinema, from ballet to every other performance] rather than visual arts. Media, languages and methods, from architectural design to bookbinding and printing, have to proceed from Art and Technique to a new unit, to an integrating publishing system. The Bauhausbücher are the highest point of reference developed by two curators to implement a wide range

of relationship in order to achieve the two most important communication objectives set out: to ensure the survival of the Bauhaus and to establish a pioneering teaching platform that would influence and scatter their ideas in real objects: exhibitions, books and magazines. Historical Archives of Politecnico di Milano publicly presented, in an exhibition celebrated from April 3rd to June 30th 2017, the full series of works conceived at Weimar, and made in Dessau. From 14 notebooks published between 1924 and 1930, work programme that included the publication of fifty titles, ten present in the exhibition came from Albe and Lica Steiner Archive, are a precious evidence of the education and cultural openness of the two milan graphic designers in the 1930s. Therefore the exhibition was looking for traces of the most significant graphic and storytelling influence from this Bauhaus' editorial production, that became visual patterns, printed to investigate the new forms of the book, typo-photo-graphic vessels sources that flowed from the fertile soil of the Bauhaus' education and that would then became reference points of the latest graphic culture in the 1930s and 1940s. In this century the critical fortune of the Weimar school has been increasing and developing, conveyed by architectural magazine such as "Casabella" and graphic ones such as "Campo Grafico" in Italy and "Das Werk", "Das Neue Frankfurt" and "Typographische Mitteilungen" overseas, that have echoed its graphic styles and reused its significant elements.

Giulio Carlo Argan. L'esperienza 'della' Bauhaus

Alessandro Demma

// abstract

Giulio Carlo Argan. The Bauhaus experience

The article analyzes the critical and methodological reflections of Carlo Argan regarding the Bauhaus, starting with his essential 1951 book *Walter Gropius e la Bauhaus*, highlighting his view of phenomenological, sociological, political, anthropological aspects regarding the German school and, most of all, stressing the importance that this movement was having on the artistic trends of the second half of the twentieth century and on the fate that it could still have on future generations. A historical and ideological reinterpretation of one of the most significant experience in the contemporary art system that the Turin critic cleverly addressed with his rationalistic, pragmatic and internationalist soul, enhancing the importance of the creative process and of the formal educational chance, and pointing out the social and cultural meaning of this exceptional and example art epiphany.