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The legacy of the Bauhaus Movement has become the décor of our daily lives. The movement’s champion of form and function while embracing industrialization has infused the movement’s artistry into homes and everyday lives. Producing for the masses with both skill and artistry, as well as forced globalization at the hand of the Nazi party, makes the Bauhaus Movement uniquely situated for far reaching and long lasting impact. “The Bauhaus produced an incredible array of artefacts, from angle poise lamps to chess sets, all distinguished by their functional and elegant construction. They were simple and useful, and their simplicity made them beautiful. In an era of ornamentation, their streamlined appearance was revolutionary” (Cook).

To understand the influence of the Bauhaus movement, we must understand how the movement came to be. The Staatliches Bauhaus was a German art school that opened in 1919 and lasted 14 years, closing in 1931. Literally translated as “building house”, the school married arts and industry, opposing the ornate and opulent styles of Art Nouveau and Art Deco that preceded it. The Bauhaus school was more than just a school; it preached a way of thought and a new view of the world. Bauhaus artists favoured linear and geometrical forms, while floral or curvilinear shapes were avoided. Only line, shape and colour mattered. Anything else was unnecessary and needed to be reduced (Roseanne). In short, the Bauhaus applied the adage “form follows function”, infusing art into the everyday. As the *Brittanica* states, the emphasis was on “producing functional and aesthetically pleasing objects for mass society rather than individual items for a wealthy elite” (“Bauhaus”).

The school was founded in Weimar, Germany by Walter Gropius. Walter Gropius “repeatedly emphasized that the Bauhaus emerged from the spirit of the *Deutscher Werkbund*…[a way] to create a practical, effective connection between commerce, craftmanship and industry, and the designing artist” (Siebenbrodt 16). The school itself required students to take a 6-month preliminary course, followed by 3 years of workshop courses. These courses included carpentry, metal, pottery, stained glass, wall painting, weaving, graphics, typography, and stagecraft. The workers would earn a journeyman’s degree upon completion (“Bauhaus”). The result of a practical degree meant that graduates often joined the workforce and helped to bring the Bauhaus style into the industry and by extension, into people’s homes.

The Bauhaus school admitted women, who were rarely granted opportunities to pursue art education in Germany. Despite the theoretical attempt at equality, the Bauhaus school failed in execution. In Gropius’ greeting speech to the first class of the Bauhaus school he advocates, “Absolute equality but also absolutely equal obligation to the work of all craftsmen.” And in the same breath, the same speech, he goes on to say there is “No difference between the beautiful and the strong sex” (Capps). Despite the façade of gender equality, the flawed practice meant that teachers and leaders of the school primarily relegated women to the feminine art of weaving. Still, some found success even given these limitations, such as Gunta Stölzl. Another notable exception was Marianne Brandt, who focused on metalcraft, and is still regarded today as a foundational contributor to Bauhaus design. According to a 2010 survey at the Museum of Modern Art, “the weaving workshop became one of the only departments in the Bauhaus that was financially viable...along with the metal workshop, which was led by Marianne Brandt.” (Capps).

Building financially viable programs contributed in two ways to the school and overall Bauhaus movement. In a literal sense, they produced revenue streams that supported the school and allowed for continuing education that was self sufficient to some degree. Secondly, by producing and selling Bauhaus artisan goods, these goods were delivered into the hands of consumers, furthering the spread of Bauhaus ideals. The goods created by Bauhaus artists were consumed by the population and absorbed as everyday products in homes. With exposure and demand came recognition, and the ability to mass produce goods meant a wide audience for consumption. When the school moved to Dessau in 1925, “Bauhaus wallpaper became the school’s bestselling product. At last, here was an art school which could actually pay its way” (Cook).

Escaping the increasingly conservative political landscape of Weimar, the school’s move to Dessau was marked notably by a new building. The Dessau building “contained many features that later became hallmarks of modernist architecture, including steel-frame construction, a glass curtain wall, and an asymmetrical, pinwheel plan, throughout which Gropius distributed studio, classroom, and administrative space for maximum efficiency and spatial logic” (Winton). The asymmetrical pinwheel was in part a tribute to the prominence of the Junkers aircraft manufacturer that was a leading contributor to industry in Dessau. This homage to industry is fitting, considering prominent faculty László Moholy-Nagy’s success at pursuing a more Constructivist curriculum for the school, “with more resources devoted to art forms that could serve a modern industrial society” (Eskilson, 217).

The emphasis on practicality and affordable, simple design allowed the school to sustain itself.