

Bauhaus 100: The Print Portfolios

Interactive Tour: Explore, Experience, Experiment

Teachers' Notes

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| Summary | <p>These interactive tours will take students on a guided exploration of our <i>Bauhaus 100</i> exhibition, using Bauhaus-inspired drawing exercises to experiment with colour and form.</p> <p>This exhibition, organised to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus, features Bauhaus prints borrowed from the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart. The motto of the Bauhaus was to 'Rethink the World' through art and design. The prints in this centenary exhibition, printed between 1922 and 1924 at the State Bauhaus in Weimar, explore the visionary European artists associated with the Bauhaus and provide an insight into the much larger Bauhaus phenomenon.</p> |
| Duration | 90 minutes |
| Year groups suitable for | Primary (Junior Infants – 6th class) and Post-Primary (1st Year – 6th Year) |
| Session itinerary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • The group will be guided to explore the exhibition using a series of exercises inspired by real Bauhaus teaching methods • Short workshop experimenting with paper, form and colour |
| Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce students to the <i>Bauhaus 100</i> exhibition • To increase awareness & appreciation of the use of colour, line and shape in art • To deepen sense of familiarity with art through experimentation and play • To connect the works in the exhibition with everyday places and things • To understand the efficacy of the revolutionary Bauhaus teaching model |
| Themes explored | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shape • Line • Colour • Form • The Bauhaus |
| Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing activities, with partners and alone • Explorations on shape and colour • Explorations of materials • Looking and responding • Discussion |

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| <p>Curriculum links</p> | <p>Primary - Visual arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing • Paint & Colour • Print • Construction • Looking & Responding <p>Junior Cycle Visual Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical and visual language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 analyse their work, or that of another, using appropriate vocabulary and knowledge 1.2 respond to an artwork using critical and visual language 1.3 critique an artwork using critical and visual language • Visual culture and appreciation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.7 examine the method of a number of artists and the artwork they created 1.8 discuss examples of historical and contemporary visual art • Art elements and design principles (AEDP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.10 identify the use of art elements and design principles within an artwork 1.11 consider the use of the art elements and design principles in their own artwork 1.12 apply their understanding of the art elements and design principles to make an artwork <p>Leaving Certificate - Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimentation with a variety of media • Activity leading to a development of a sense of pattern and rhythm study of colour • History and appreciation of art – European art |
| <p>Learning outcomes</p> | <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop knowledge and understanding of the Bauhaus • Explore shape, form, colour and line • Be able to think critically about artwork • See experiments, even unsuccessful ones, as a platform for learning • Develop drawing skills • Develop communication skills • Develop visual literacy skills • Explore and experiment • Be surprised and inspired • Have fun |
| <p>Before your visit – background information</p> | <p>The Bauhaus was a school</p> <p>More specifically, it was a revolutionary school of art, design and (later) architecture. Founded by Walter Gropius in 1919, the Bauhaus took an interdisciplinary approach to art education, merging fine art with craft</p> |

and applied arts. In the school's manifesto, Gropius stated: *"There is no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman. The artist is an exalted craftsman."*

It had an innovative curriculum

Students began their studies with the preliminary course, which provided them with a foundation in materials and design principles, before they progressed to the workshops.

Each discipline had its own workshop: sculpture, joinery, metal, ceramics, stained glass, graphic print, stagecraft, wall painting, weaving and, later, graphic design and photography.

This exhibition focuses on prints produced in the graphic printing workshop

The graphic printing workshop produced significant portfolios (folders) of prints including the series on view in the exhibition—Neue europäische Graphik (New European Graphics). These portfolios were made to be sold, and were expected to generate income for the Bauhaus, as well as to raise awareness of the school. Unfortunately, the prints were not a commercial success, and the graphic printing workshop was disbanded when the Bauhaus moved to Dessau in 1925.

Not all the artists featured in the exhibition were Bauhäusler (members of the Bauhaus)

One portfolio features prints by Bauhaus masters including Lyonel Feininger, Johannes Itten, Paul Klee and Oskar Schlemmer. The other three portfolios feature the work of a diverse group of painters involved in Abstraction, Futurism and Expressionism, including Marc Chagall, Franz Marc and Natalia Goncharova. In a show of solidarity with the Bauhaus, these artists donated their original prints to the project, and students in the workshop printed the impressions.

The Bauhaus was shortlived, but its impact was longlasting

The Bauhaus only existed for 14 years. During its short and frequently troubled existence, it moved from its original location in Weimar to Dessau in 1925, and from Dessau to Berlin in 1932. The Nazis forced its closure in 1933. Many Bauhaus artists fled Germany, bringing the school's ideology with them. Key figures, such as Josef and Anni Albers, László Moholy-Nagy and Walter Gropius, took up teaching posts in North America and kept the Bauhaus spirit alive by introducing a new audience to its experimental approach to art education. Today, the influence of the Bauhaus is visible in everything from buildings and

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| | <p>domestic utensils, to textiles and signage. As Mies Mies van der Rohe observed, 'only an idea has the power to spread so widely.'</p> <p>Find out more on the Bauhaus 100 website.</p> |
| <p>Before your visit – suggested activities</p> | <p>Practice the breathing exercises that we'll start out our tour with, modelled after Johannes Itten's class. Itten developed the celebrated Bauhaus preliminary course and was a major influence during the early years. Itten's classes began with exercises in concentration, breathing and rhythm, the momentum of which was to flow into the students' creative work. Itten was a follower of Mazdaznan, a fire cult originating in the United States that was largely derived from Zoroastrianism. He observed a strict vegetarian diet and practiced meditation as a means to develop inner understanding and intuition, which was for him the principal source of artistic inspiration and practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bend and turn, twist side to side to wake up and loosen up the external muscles • Stand perfectly still to relax the internal organs • Hum a low note and feel the sound vibrate all through the body • Lastly, try to breathe quietly, slowly, and deeply |
| <p>After your visit – suggested activities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For more exercises relating to space and material, try these Josef Albers paper exercises to further your students' understanding of Bauhaus teaching • Similar to the Kandinsky colour and form exercise we did, here is an online version • This resource contains many different Bauhaus-inspired exercises • "Still life" drawing, based on Wassily Kandinsky teaching methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gather whatever classroom materials you like, choosing especially based on those items that are larger, with more simple shapes (eg: chairs, bin, scissors, etc.) ○ Display the materials in a geometric relationship to one another ○ Draw off of the still life you've created, feeling free to do so either in a literal way or by using the shapes as inspiration |