



Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title: From Bauhaus to School House: What young artists and I should learn **Name:** John Kannofsky

Other Team Members:

Program: Los Angeles Program

Trip Dates: 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001

Location Visited: Germany

Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 01

Project Summary: Earlier this past year, I received a grant to visit art classrooms in Germany to compile best practices and effective environments for teaching art. I interviewed 5 different teachers in their classroom and photographed effective teaching visuals. My goal was to compile a visual art curriculum that used many significant and contemporary methods of teaching and learning from these experiences.

I have studied many art movements, styles and philosophies as part of my own education. I asked a number of artists and art teachers which art movement they believed was the most influential. A few movement names came up in these discussions but overwhelming most believed that the influence of Bauhaus was the most significant in 20th century society. I made that choice: to visit the birth place of a utopian art movement that rose from the ashes of a terrible war, with a goal to help improve society by educating the remnants of an decimated community in a new and modern way.

I traveled to three major cities of the Bauhaus -Weimar, Dessau and Berlin, in Germany - with the goal to meet teachers, students and artists and discuss the lasting effects of this art movement. I met with the directors, assistant directors, project coordinators, artists, and students to discuss the Bauhaus, its place in German art history and its continued influence in education.

As an art educator, I am always reaching toward a richer and more vital learning environment for myself and for my students.

Career Impact: I view the trip as one major stepping stone towards learning about 20th century art history and implementing some of the more significant and relevant art teaching methods of the past century. I saw and discussed how art and craft are separated and then brought together in a classroom studio that generates art as the union of both. I am still unconvinced that their methods in the 1920s are the most effective contemporary methods but do believe that the Bauhaus ideas have some use for students at the beginning of art studies. Unbeknownst to most, the Bauhaus pedagogy and art still resonate in many art classrooms in Los Angeles high schools. Much classroom studio work has created the bridge between what is considered fine art versus what is considered more commercial and popular art. It has moved me a little closer to the practical or functional aspects of art making and inspiring me to add the debate between fine and commercial art into my classroom.

Classroom/Community Impact:The Bauhaus is the one method that does address craft, skill work, formal ideas, what is relevant and important to current society, and the needs of the consumer. I have implemented several units that focus on modern art ideas, creative, personal expression and the development of personal style and self.

Prior to my trip, I began to develop ideas that combine high school subjects into one project. For example, I've begun to focus on bringing together Art and Physics classes to design, produce and implement a windmill-driven Paper Mill to recycle paper for the school and art department. This will address the shortage of paper at our school, while giving the art department the ability to create high quality paper for larger projects. The Art Department is teaming up as well with Biology to come up with effective landscaping design for the new campus next year, looking at the practical aspects of water use, using desert indigenous plants alongside natural and aesthetic design issues.

The Bauhaus was not only an art movement with a changing aesthetic that addressed a variety of art and societal issues, but it was also a real school, with real teachers that promoted their own very modern points of view. In the 1930s, after its dissolution, several Bauhaus artist-teachers moved to the U.S. and had a great influence on the direction of modern American art.

Open Response: The Bauhaus trip directly addressed my own teaching techniques. I began to think specifically about the pathway a student takes toward maturity as a student/artist. This pathway has always been initially a creative exploration, focusing directly on the students experience with media and ideas filtered through the process of trial and error. The Bauhaus focused on this in its early stages, but took off in the early 20s towards working with what many art teachers now call the elements and principles of art. This

theoretical focus worked hand in hand with craft work which promoted the school's belief that both were essential for the artist's development. I began to look at the process developed at the Bauhaus as one of the benchmarks, methods or units in a student's evolution.

Finally, I am in continual contact and discussion with members of the German artistic and academic community. I have set up a date in the spring to bring art made by Los Angeles art students to a gallery in Berlin. This art will use some of the methods developed in the Bauhaus, focusing on the students' personal and contemporary update from urban L.A. I will be presenting the work of the students along with my own to the charter school organization, hopefully bringing some of these influential practices into other art teachers' classrooms.

Quote: Should the Future look to the Past for ideas?

Photos:

Bauhaus Archives, Berlin, Germany
Spent 1 week in the Archives researching Bauhaus art education methods



Bauhaus Archive - Berlin, Germany

Holocaust Memorial, Berlin, Germany
Contemporary symbolic sculpture shows influence of Bauhaus theories of form



Holocaust Memorial - Berlin, Germany

Bauhaus University, Weimar, Germany
First building to house Bauhaus courses, 1919



Original Bauhaus University - Weimar, Germany



Examples of Bauhaus University artwork - Weimar, Germany

Bauhaus Foundation, Dessau, Germany
Spent 1 week at the Foundation discussing the Bauhaus with the assistant director, program manager and principal research director.

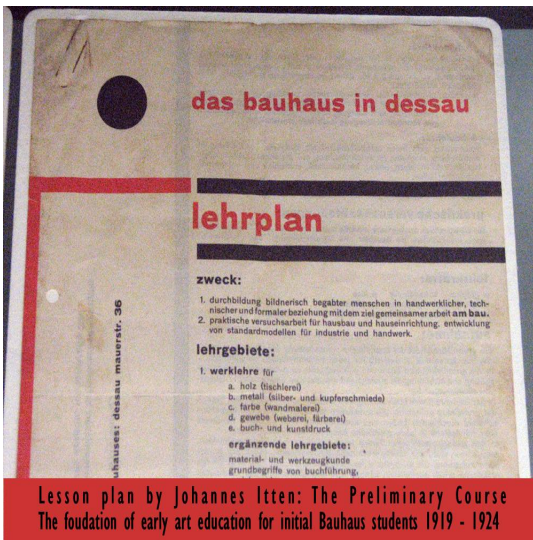


Bauhaus Foundation - Dessau, Germany

Bauhaus Foundation, Dessau, Germany



Original Bauhaus Theater 1925
Bauhaus Foundation Theater - Dessau, Germany



Johannes Itten's Original Lesson Plan - Dessau, Germany



Traveling Between Bauhaus teacher's houses and the Foundation - Dessau, Germany