



Students at the Bauhaus (Photo: Bauhaus Archive)

BOOK | INTERNATIONAL CALL

WOMEN AT THE BAUHAUS, THE BAUHAUS TO THE WOMEN. FOR A RECONSIDERATION OF THE MYTH

Edited by Paola Ardizzola and Olimpia Niglio

WOMEN AT THE BAUHAUS, THE BAUHAUS TO THE WOMEN. FOR A RECONSIDERATION OF THE MYTH

Edited by Paola Ardizzola and Olimpia Niglio

The Bauhaus school, whose centenary of its birth falls this year, despite the short duration of the time span in which it was active (1919-1933), it earned a fame that today get closer to the myth, thanks above all to an extremely innovative and democratic pedagogical methodology. Yet one of the most advanced European societies of the time, which included scientists as Albert Einstein, sociologists as Georg Simmel, philosophers as Walter Benjamin, musicians as Arnold Schönberg and writers as Bertolt Brecht, was really ready to a school which offered identical opportunities to males and females students? On paper, yes, as the Bauhaus statute stated. But de facto the Bauhaus female students were "channelled" towards those disciplines in which the collective imaginary mostly recognized the role of a woman. "We are absolutely against giving them an architectural education" wrote Walter Gropius in 1921 about women. Therefore, Architecture was substantially forbidden to women. In fact, although women constituted about a third of those enrolled in the Bauhaus, and in the first year the number of female students even exceeded the number of male students, the girls attended mainly the Weaving workshop. For a long time the Bauhaus masters failed to force all the girls to enroll in the female class, so much so that in the early years their presence in the Carpentry, Book binding and Ceramics workshops was conspicuous.

Important woman master there was only one, Gunta Stölz, a splendid 'priestess' of textile. The textile was experienced and taught as a synthesis between artistic expression and technical skills, at long last united for generating a product which was at once an object of art and design. However there are many other great exceptions, which today appear as rule of an artistic season that can rightly be defined as epic, for the long-term message that it was able to carry, and which is still reified in contemporary schools of art and architecture.

The women of the Bauhaus were able to shape a leading role in the construction of artistic methods and practices that in the future will become the founding means of a new approach in relation to the art-technique-industry relationship as well as in the pedagogical methodology. Able of creating *a room on one's own*, as Virginia Woolf put it, they claimed for the woman the possibility of contributing to a cultural development that until that moment struggled to offer open field to the female gender.

Splendid exceptions are Anni Albers, never overshadowed by the gigantic figure of her husband Josef Albers, or Marianne Brandt who obstinately chose the 'Metal' workshop, thus realizing some industrial design objects that are now icons of Modernism, or the photographer Lucia Moholy-Nagy, not at all intimidated by the surname of her husband, master of the Bauhaus. Female students who will become protagonists of the Twentieth century culture, in many cases successfully exporting the Bauhaus model to other countries, especially in the United States, but also in Japan as Yamawaki Michiko did, thus dictating many of the guidelines that characterize the 1900s. Skillful ambassadors of beauty and innovation, finally they were free to express their creativity up to the fullest. There are also dramatic stories of those who had a tragic fate like Otti Berger, a victim of barbarism in the mincer of Auschwitz. And yet today all the women of the Bauhaus deserve an important historiographical rehabilitation that highlights in this highly celebratory year their contribution to the success of the school established in Weimar, short and visionary just like the Weimar Republic, and its heritage. This book intends to celebrate them through critical essays that are not just a tribute, but a due act towards those who knew how to give an innovative contribution to visual and design culture, thanks to a strong and clear message, resourceful and farsighted, that still reverberates in contemporary society and indeed still characterizes its most creative components.

Languages: The language authorized is: English.

It is also possible to submit articles in other languages (Spanish, Italian, French, German, etc..)

Submission Guidelines for Contributions [edA]

<http://esempidiarchitettura.it/sito/forauthors/>

Policy

<http://esempidiarchitettura.it/sito/editorial-board/>

Deadline: October, 30 2019

Please send your submission by e-mail: publicationseda@gmail.com

Rome, April 18, 2019