

**Bauhaus-  
Universität  
Weimar**



## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **Future City – Future Bauhaus**

**Bauhaus past, present, future:**

**Context of the civic – the City as context.**

**How can the idealist heritage of the original Bauhaus help meet the challenges of contemporary civic life?**

An International Symposium for critical reflection on the founding of the original Bauhaus in Weimar, 90 years ago.

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 5th – 8th November 2009

2009 commemorates the 90th anniversary of the creation of the original Bauhaus in Weimar. In this context, over the coming year, the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar will discuss the history, current state and future of the Bauhaus's original core ideas in collaboration with many partners. The planned conference, an international symposium, should create a space for reflection on the state of contemporary architecture and city planning in the face of current challenges. Proceedings will also be dedicated to the question of whether the Bauhaus can now deliver leading edge transnational ideas for urban living.

As is well known, the original ideas of the Bauhaus produced a mixed reception and many interpretations. This was influenced by forced migration to all parts of the world and their dissipation in various political systems after 1945. Like almost no other school, the Bauhaus acted both as origin and focal point for architectural debates in the 20th Century. In the Bauhaus, analysis also focused on the functional architectural world of the Post-War Era and International Style. In this way, for better or worse, it has become a kind of symbol, representative of Architecture and its role in society. This very idealistic concern has become a legend, and the original context of this ambitious project has been lost. The symposium aims to resurrect the ideal character of this mythical Bauhaus and in the process begin a critical recontextualisation to explore possible options for present and future urban living spaces.

In contrast to previous discourses which often viewed the organisation of architectural theory, politics and the general community of the Bauhaus as the source of creative momentum, this conference will use the link between the Bauhaus and the city as the basis for a necessary revision of the Bauhaus legacy. Thereby, in the near future a revival of the Bauhaus should occur in which a comparison of the past and present contexts of architecture, city planning and city building is undertaken. The development of the original Bauhaus occurred at a time, in the beginning of the 20th century, when the industrialisation of Germany had reached a climax. The cities were a reflection of the new living conditions of industrialised society. Germany experienced an unprecedented increase in city growth, which, in itself raised many design, planning and social questions. In hindsight as well as with modern day understanding, the Bauhaus can be interpreted as an ambitious attempt to find appropriate answers to these challenges using architecture, urban development and design. The core elements of the conviction of the day were the belief in the necessary crossing of boundaries between the various disciplines and courage to experiment.

90 years later, the situation in our cities is shaped by similar complexity. As was the case back then, the urban consequences of developments such as cultural and economic globalisation, social upheavals, increased mobility, technical innovations and demographic and ecological challenges are difficult to estimate and to predict. To what extent the Bauhaus of today can offer an innovative orientation towards discourse around architecture, the city and society is the core question of this symposium.

To address this question, the symposium program critically reflects on the central aspects in the history of the Bauhaus and its potential for revival and renewal. These aspects are: Bauhaus and the City; The Bauhaus as an urban Utopia; Structure/Design à la Bauhaus for city living; City/Architecture as project and craft; Urban development and the personification of architecture; The City as transdisciplinary research; The Unity of method and design; From International Style to globalised city.

The symposium will be supported and framed by international experts from the fields of architecture, city planning and city research. Room for debate will be made possible on eight central themes through the Call for Papers, which will attract participants from all disciplines for four parallel Workshops. The following questions will be addressed:

#### *Bauhaus and the City*

The relationship between the Bauhaus and the "City" will initially be reconstructed from the implicit and few explicit notions of Bauhaus personalities relating to the modern City. This reconstructed view of the city will be critically discussed against the background of general city theory. Contributors should in this context expose and critically discuss the benefits of the Bauhaus' more theoretical assumptions and well understood elements regarding the City from the perspective of individual problems of city living.

#### *The Bauhaus as an urban Utopia*

In the history of the Bauhaus, many authors have repeatedly highlighted the social

beliefs of the protagonists of the Bauhaus. A critical reconstruction of this history of ideas will be followed as a vision for the City through a contextualisation of the Bauhaus, as well as showing today, using case studies, how much this vision could help future proposals, both planned and desired, for the city.

#### *Structure/Design à la Bauhaus for city Living*

In the Bauhaus, Structure and Design were linked to the requirement of creating adequate living conditions for modern society. How did this concern for the life of the majority of people living in cities change, and what sorts of expectations are apparent in premium design in contemporary cities? The selected presentations reflect the transfer of individual aspects from the design requirements of the Bauhaus to the demand for sustainable city development, especially in the areas of habitation and consumption.

#### *City/Architecture as project and craft*

Certain conceptions of architecture and the city, in which the craft is pushed into the foreground, combined to establish the Bauhaus with a conscious reference to the "Bauhütte" of the middle ages, an organised cooperative of master buildings. However, over time the Bauhaus developed its own form of organisation which is most definitely project orientated. How is this conception of architectural production still adequate? Papers should reflect on the various forms of architectural organisation and on the meaning of "Craft" and "Project" in different examples from contemporary practice.

#### *Urban development and the personification of Architecture*

Without doubt, the legend of the Bauhaus lives on most obviously through its strong personalities. The meaning of the architect has however undergone considerable change, and now the architect as protagonist in the building and planning within a complex city is under question. Which elements of job socialisation are important to meet contemporary architectural challenges within urban practice? This Workshop will examine the ways in which the personalities of individual architects can be developed with regard to the charisma of the "Bauhäusler", the original personalities of the Bauhaus movement.

#### *The City as transdisciplinary research*

The Bauhaus is distinguished in its multitude of different personalities with roots in various fields and artistic areas. In a nutshell, the Bauhaus can be understood as a place of transdisciplinary discourse. This workshop will focus on possible traditions in the Bauhaus which might be useful in contemporary city research, recognised as a transdisciplinary program.

#### *The Unity of method and design*

The credo of the Bauhaus is well known for wanting to forge a new unity of method and design. What are the presumptions behind this philosophy? In this workshop, questions should be asked regarding possible reminiscences for a new city shaped by new media in the form of information and communications technology. Successful presentations will discuss the manner in which the "Mediacity" can be realised as an extension of the Bauhaus's idea of the unity of method and design.

#### *From International Style to globalised city*

The Bauhaus created a worldwide formula for functional urban development in the

form of the International Style, a style that emerged under the influence of Mies van der Rohe. The link between design and building set standards for the living culture of the 20th century, as realised in the exhibition "Die Wohnung" (the Apartment) in 1927 in Stuttgart at the Weissenhof Estate. However, today, cities have generated very different demands for urban development and architecture as a result of globalisation. Is the International Style formula for living still relevant in the globalised city? Successful presentations will examine the influence of economic and cultural globalisation as reflected in urban development.

The conference will be held in English. A Scientific Committee of world-renowned urban researchers will select the participants. The Call for Papers will be forwarded to all important national and international journals.

Members of the Scientific Committee: John Clammer (Urban Program of the United Nation University, Tokyo), Yuri Kazepov (Vice-President of the International Association of Urban Sociology), Kate Nesbitt (Princeton University), Rob Atkinson (President of the European Urban Research Association), Wim Salet (President of the Association of the European Schools of Planning), Gerd de Bruyn (Head of the Basics of Modern Architecture and Design Institute (IGMA) in the Faculty of Architecture and City Planning at the Universität Stuttgart), K. Michael Hays (Harvard University).

Please specify your desired workshop and send your abstract (max. 500 words) to:

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Applications close: 1st July 2009