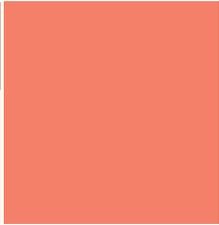


# PLAKAT

a constructivist font by Chris Lozos  
Based on a 1923 Bauhaus exhibition poster

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HAMBURG EFONSTIU

Hamburgetonstiu

**PLAKAT** is CAPS and Small Caps with Lower case.

A Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over the Lazy Dog and Got His Butt Bit  
as he Went Over Because the Doggone Dog was Bent out of Shape  
for Being Awakened. Another Sad Story (What Else Would You Expect  
From Deacom). A Modernist Tale Can Wag Anywhere "but not in front of  
Hrant" (unless you want a long dissertation on the evils of Modernism  
:-).

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# Bauhaus 1919-33

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The Bauhaus began with an utopian definition: "The building of the future" was to combine all the arts in ideal unity. This required a new type of artist beyond academic specialization, for whom the Bauhaus would offer adequate education. In order to reach this goal, the founder, Walter Gropius, saw the necessity to develop new teaching methods and was convinced that the base for any art was to be found in handcraft: "the school will gradually turn into a workshop". Indeed, artists and craftsmen directed classes and production together at the Bauhaus in Weimar. This was intended to remove any distinction between fine arts and applied arts.

The reality of technical civilization, however, led to requirements that could not only be fulfilled by a revitalization of handcraft. In 1923, the Bauhaus reacted with a changed program, which was to mark its future image under the motto: "art and technology—a new unity". Industrial potentials were to be applied to satisfactory design standards, regarding both functional and aesthetic aspects. The Bauhaus workshops produced prototypes for mass production: from a single lamp to a complete dwelling.

Of course, the educational and social claim to a new configuration of life and its environment could not always be achieved. And the Bauhaus was not alone with this goal, but the name became a near synonym for this trend.

The history of the Bauhaus is by no means linear. The changes in directorship and amongst the teachers, artistic influence from far and wide, in combination with the political situation in which the Bauhaus experiment was staged, led to permanent transformation. The numerous consequences of this experiment still today flow into contemporary life.

The Bauhaus masters on the roof of the Bauhaus building in Dessau. From the left: Josef Albers, Hinnerk Scheper, Georg Muche, László Moholy-

Nagy, Herbert Bayer, Joost Schmidt, Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Vassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, Gunta Stölzl and Oskar Schlemmer.

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## Workshop for Typography and Commercial Art

In the first years of the Bauhaus at Weimar, typography did not yet play the central role it was later to take on. For Johannes Itten and Lothar Schreyer, calligraphy was essentially an artistic means of expression. At first, practical fields of application remained seldom and were restricted to small, miscellaneous printed matters.

With the appointment of Moholy-Nagy in 1923, who was to introduce the ideas of "New Typography" to the Bauhaus, the situation radically changed. He considered typescript to be primarily a communications medium, and was concerned with the "clarity of the message in its most emphatic form". His influence is clearly visible already in 1923 in the advertising campaign for the large Bauhaus exhibition of Summer 1923. Moholy-Nagy designed the layout for the exhibition publication and further took over the typography of the "Bauhaus books".

From then on, typography at the Bauhaus was closely connected to corporate identity and to the development of an unmistakable image for the school. Characteristic for the design were clear, unadorned type prints, the articulation and accentuation of pages through distinct symbols or typographic elements highlighted in color, and finally direct information in a combination of text and photography, for which the name "Typofoto" was created.

In addition, the consideration of economic factors led to the usage of normed formats, a partly simplified spelling, and more particularly, the abolition of capitalization.

In Weimar, next to Moholy-Nagy, both Joost Schmidt and Herbert Bayer had also been concerned with typography. In Dessau, Bayer took over the newly installed workshop for printing and advertising and

rapidly transformed it into a professional studio for graphic design. He intensively developed Avant-garde typesetting and his posters and printed matters show a concern with contemporary themes from the psychology of advertising.

Following his departure from the Bauhaus in 1928, Bayer continued to work at first in Germany, later in the USA, and became one of the most influential graphic designers of the twentieth century.

Joost Schmidt was his successor at the Bauhaus. He introduced a systematic course for the design of lettering and advertising graphics and expanded it to the practice of exhibition design. Examples of the applicability of experimental forms of presentation in architecture, sculpture, photography, and typography were presented in Bauhaus traveling exhibitions and at conventions in and outside Germany. The stands were designed by the advertising workshop.

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## Manifesto

The ultimate aim of all creative activity is a building! The decoration of buildings was once the noblest function of fine arts, and fine arts were indispensable to great architecture. Today they exist in complacent isolation, and can only be rescued by the conscious co-operation and collaboration of all craftsmen. Architects, painters, and sculptors must once again come to know and comprehend the composite character of a building, both as an entity and in terms of its various parts. Then their work will be filled with that true architectonic spirit which, as "salon art", it has lost.

The old art schools were unable to produce this unity; and how, indeed, should they have done so, since art cannot be taught? Schools must return to the workshop. The world of the pattern-designer and applied artist, consisting only of drawing and painting must become once again a world in which things are built. If the young person who rejoices in creative activity now begins his career as in the older days by learning a craft, then the unproductive

"artist" will no longer be condemned to inadequate artistry, for his skills will be preserved for the crafts in which he can achieve great things.

Architects, painters, sculptors, we must all return to crafts! For there is no such thing as "professional art". There is no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman. The artist is an exalted craftsman. By the grace of Heaven and in rare moments of inspiration which transcend the will, art may unconsciously blossom from the labour of his hand, but a base in handicrafts is essential to every artist. It is there that the original source of creativity lies.

Let us therefore create a new guild of craftsmen without the class-distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsmen and artists! Let us desire, conceive, and create the new building of the future together. It will combine architecture, sculpture, and painting in a single form, and will one day rise towards the heavens from the hands of a million workers as the crystalline symbol of a new and coming faith.

WALTER GROPIUS

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## Werkstatt Typographie und Reklame

In den ersten Jahren des Weimarer Bauhauses spielte die Typographie noch nicht die zentrale Rolle, die ihr später zukam. Schrift war für Bauhausmeister wie Johannes Itten oder Lothar Schreyer in erster Linie ein künstlerisches Ausdrucksmittel. Praktische Anwendungen waren anfangs selten und blieben auf kleinere Drucksachen beschränkt.

Die Situation änderte sich 1923 grundlegend mit der Berufung Moholy-Nagy, der die Ideen der Neuen Typographie am Bauhaus einführte. Schrift galt ihm vor allem als Medium der Kommunikation; es ging ihm um "klare Mitteilung in ihrer eindringlichsten Form". Die Werbung zur großen Weimarer Bauhaus-Ausstellung im Sommer 1923 zeigt bereits deutlich seinen Einfluß. Moholy-Nagy entwarf das Layout für die Begleitpublikation zur Ausstellung und übernahm dann auch die typographische Gestaltung für die 1925 eröffnete Reihe der "Bauhausbücher".

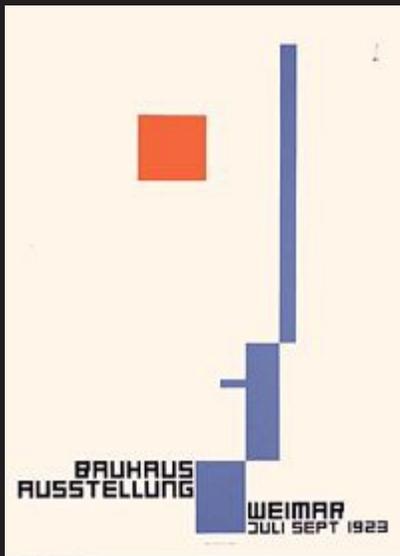
Von nun an war die Typographie am Bauhaus ganz wesentlich mit der Eigenwerbung, mit der Entwicklung eines unverwechselbaren Erscheinungsbildes für die Schule verbunden. Gestaltungsmittel waren klare, schmucklose Druckschriften, die Gliederung und Akzentuierung der Seiten durch einprägsame Zeichen oder farbige typographische Elemente, schließlich eine direkte Information durch die Verbindung von Schrift und Fotografie, für die der Begriff "Typofoto" geprägt wurde.

Hinzu kam der Aspekt der Ökonomie im Gebrauch genormter Formate und zeitweise auch einer vereinfachten Orthographie, insbesondere der Kleinschreibung.

Neben Moholy-Nagy traten schon in Weimar auch Joost Schmidt und Herbert Bayer hervor. Bayer übernahm am Bauhaus Dessau die Leitung der neu eingerichteten Druck- und Reklamewerkstatt und konnte sie innerhalb kurzer Zeit zu einem professionell arbeitenden Atelier für Graphik-Design ausbauen. Er arbeitete intensiv an der Entwicklung avantgardistischer Druckschriften, und in seinen Plakaten und Drucksachen zeigt sich die Auseinandersetzung mit den aktuellen Erkenntnissen der Werbepsychologie.

Bayer hat nach dem Ausscheiden aus dem Bauhaus im Jahre 1928 seine Arbeit zunächst in Deutschland, später in den USA fortgeführt und wurde zu einem der einflußreichsten Graphik-Designer des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts.

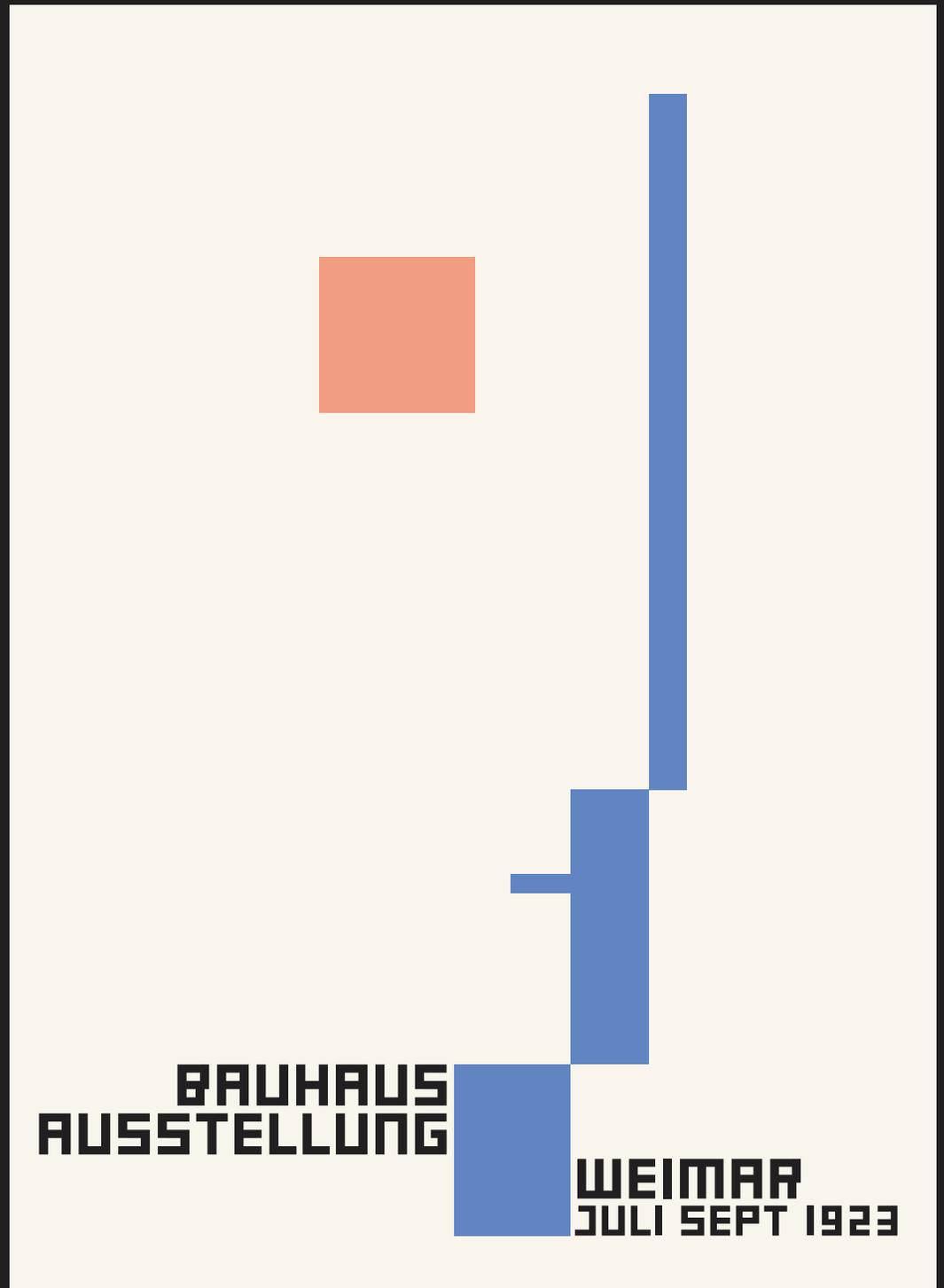
Seine Nachfolge am Bauhaus übernahm Joost Schmidt. Er führte einen systematischen Unterricht für Schriftentwurf und Werbegraphik ein, den er nun auch auf die Praxis des Ausstellungsdesigns ausdehnte. Anwendungsmöglichkeiten für experimentelle Präsentationsformen aus Architektur, Plastik, Fotografie und Typographie boten sich in Wanderausstellungen des Bauhauses ebenso wie auf Messen im In- und Ausland, die von der Werkwerkstatt gestaltet wurden.



Fritz Schleifer:  
'Plakat 1923'

Siebdruck  
72 x 99,5cm

Bauhaus Museum,  
Berlin



Facsimile produced by Chris Lozas using  
newly developed font "Plakat"