

Sleep Like a Bauhaus Master

The studio building of the Dessau Bauhaus now offers you the opportunity to stay in rooms that were once lived in by Josef Albers, Alfred Arndt, or Franz Ehrlich - and the interior of Marianne Brandt's studio has been reconstructed as well.

Visitors to the Bauhaus studio building in Dessau can now stay overnight in rooms that were occupied by Anni and Josef Albers, Gertrud and Alfred Arndt, or Franz Ehrlich in the 1920s. Recent research has made it possible to say exactly who resided in which apartment during the period between 1926 and 1932. These rooms have now been given a personal touch in the form of furniture and works of art by the respective members of the Bauhaus. The Prellerhaus, as the studio building is called, can once again be experienced in its historical, programmatic function as a collective residence. Why not soak up the heady atmosphere of the 1920s and the wild excitement of life as it went on here at the Bauhaus?

- **The Albers Room:** The painter, sculptor and art theoretician Josef Albers (1888-1976) probably occupied room 204 from September 1926 until he moved into a master's house in 1928. The Bauhaus master distinguished himself as a furniture designer, creating remarkable single items of furniture and furniture groups in the 1920s. Among them are an oak wood rack for periodicals and sheet music from 1923, a tea table of oak and white-painted glass from 1927 and a nesting table from 1926. These are all part of the furnishings in the Prellerhaus. The rack once stood in the offices of the Bauhaus's director, Walter Gropius, in Weimar; the tea table was used by Albers in his master's house in Dessau. The side table was designed by the latter in 1926, for a private residence in Berlin. These items of furniture are manufactured and marketed worldwide as re-editions by the company kleinundmore, under exclusive licence from the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation



- **The Ehrlich Room:** He was one of the most important architects in the GDR (East Germany), but he learned the tools of his trade at the Bauhaus, where he studied from 1927 to 1930 and subsequently worked for Walter Gropius: Franz Ehrlich (1907-1984). 'His' room, no. 307, is furnished with the domestic furniture series known as '602', which Ehrlich designed in the mid-1950s for manufacture by Deutsche Werkstätten in the Hellerau district of Dresden. This diverse modular system of furniture, which is characterised by a simple, no frills, box-like appearance, tapered legs, hollowed grips and multiple series, stayed in production in Hellerau for a long time,



despite initial allegations of formalism, and was among the most popular furniture in the GDR. Featured here are a desk and a sideboard from the 602 series, as well as two chairs and a coat hanger. Hanging on the wall is a reproduction of a pastel drawing from the early 1960s, showing a view of Moscow, in a frame designed especially for it by Franz Ehrlich.

● **The Arndt Room:** The Bauhaus students Gertrud Hantschk (1903–2000) and Alfred Arndt (1896–1976) married in 1927 and both lived in the Prellerhaus. When Alfred was appointed master in charge of the interiors department in 1929, the couple moved out to take up residence in one of the masters' houses. The present furnishings of room 103 feature his designs for the House of the People in the Thuringian town of Probstzella. This contained hotel rooms, for which he designed elm wood furniture between 1926 and 1928. A replica of the desk that he made for his wife in 1929 completes the ensemble in the studio building. As in Probstzella, these items of furniture were made by the joinery firm of Leopold Jahn with the assistance of Alexandra Bornemann-Arndt and the Bauhaus Archive in Berlin. The room also contains work by Gertrud Arndt, in the form of photographic self portraits that were taken in her studio between 1926 and 1929 and which can be ranked as precursors of Cindy Sherman's staged personae.



Unnamed Guest Room: One other guest room, albeit nameless, has been restored to its original built state. The work included raising the doorway height from about two metres to the original 2.22 metres and installing original fittings, electrical connections, sanitary facilities and radiators, as well as partition walls with built-in wardrobes. Extensive research has also made it possible to identify and learn more about the studio furnishings, which were standardised at the time. These mostly consisted of tubular steel furniture by Marcel Breuer, a worktop on two trestles, and a bed alcove lined with raffia cloth together with a bedspread that was produced in the weaving workshop. Items that could not now be found in the depot of the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation have been painstakingly reconstructed.



In addition to the guest rooms mentioned here, where visitors to the Bauhaus can also stay overnight, one studio has been reconstructed for display only:

● **The Marianne Brandt Room:** Marianne Brandt (1893–1983), who had previously studied at the Bauhaus in Weimar, was the acting head of the metal workshop in Dessau from 1928 until she left upon graduation. Owing to her lamps and metal objects in particular, she now ranks among the most famous Bauhaus designers. From the spring of 1927 until the autumn of 1929, she lived in room 302 of the Prellerhaus. Her photographs and notes have been of immense value to the experts researching the past of the studio building. Besides the studio's original standard furnishings, their comprehensive analysis identified personal items belonging to Brandt, which have subsequently been added as part of the historical reconstruction. Because the original pieces were destroyed or lost as a result of war or moving house, the display draws on objects of a similar type. For instance, a gramophone of the same model as the highly successful "His Masters Voice", produced around 1927, has been procured, as well as a large suitcase with wooden trim, and a simple folding wooden deckchair with colourful striped



fabric, one of Brandt's favourites. One further element of the historical furnishings, a table lamp with a hemispherical horizontal reflector, is due to augment the display. This lamp, which she probably had a hand in developing, is also thought not to have survived - at least, not this particular model. Three examples of a similar series are known to us. A version from the Bauhaus Archive Berlin, which has the greatest resemblance to the lamp photographed by Brandt, has been taken as the basis for manufacturing a replica. This replica should be ready by the spring of 2014.

- The new guest rooms in the Bauhaus Dessau studio building cost between 35 and 45 euros (up to 60 euros at weekends) per night. To book them, simply call 0340/6508-318 or go to unterkunft@bauhaus-dessau.de.