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Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls

Juliet Koss

But when I attempt to survey my task, it is clear to me that I should speak to you not of people, but of things.—Rainer Maria Rilke, 1907¹

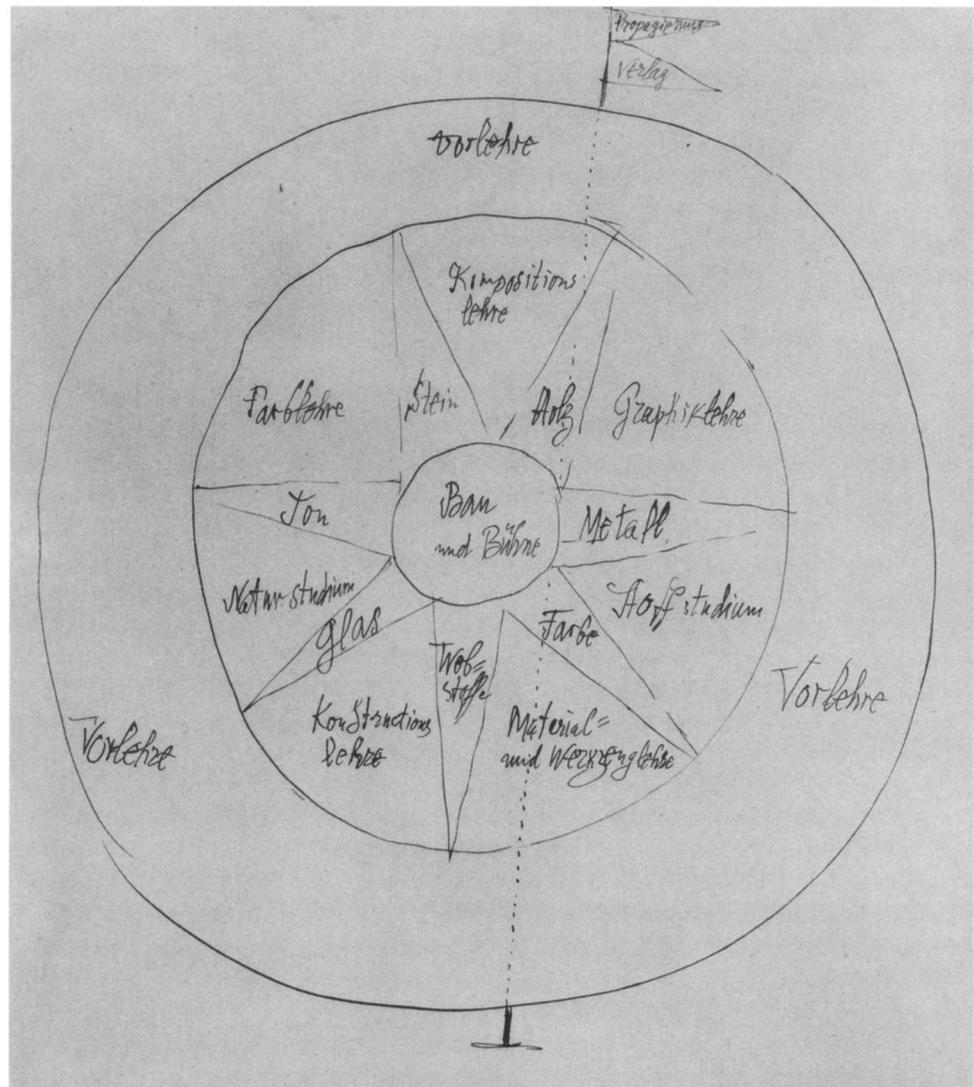
In 1961, Walter Gropius grandly declared that “the Bauhaus embraced the whole range of visual arts: architecture, planning, painting, sculpture, industrial design, and stage work.”² While the statement is not inaccurate, the straightforward inclusion of theater as one of six fundamental components of the visual arts belies the field’s more complicated status at the Bauhaus. Gropius had not mentioned theater in the initial manifesto and program of the State Bauhaus in Weimar, the four-page pamphlet published in April 1919 that proclaimed, “Architects, painters, sculptors, we must all return to the crafts!”³ But stage work soon became central, and theater proved to be a form of art that unified all the others; already in 1922, a drawing by Paul Klee of the idea and structure of the Bauhaus shows “Bau und Bühne,” or building and stage, firmly united at its core (Fig. 1). The Bauhaus held performances frequently and sponsored many in other venues, causing delight and, intermittently, disturbing the neighbors. The theater workshop, created in the summer of 1921 and overseen initially by Lothar Schreyer, is associated most closely with Oskar Schlemmer—who ran it from early 1923 until his departure in 1929—and particularly with his *Triadic Ballet*, first performed in full in 1922.⁴ Theater was also the subject of the fourth of the fourteen Bauhaus books, *Die Bühne im Bauhaus* (The stage at the Bauhaus), which appeared in 1925.⁵ When the Dessau Bauhaus was built that year, the auditorium was located near the center of the building’s triadic pinwheel, between the entrance hall and the canteen, as if to indicate theater’s pivotal status within the school’s social and professional life.

The study of theater is often impeded by the nature of the medium: notoriously difficult to document and theoretically unruly, it falls easily between disciplines while claiming to incorporate them all. This amorphous quality gained particular significance at the Bauhaus, where experiments in stage and theater design took place both on and off the premises, frequently in the context of costume parties and other festivities. In all of its incarnations, Bauhaus performances recreated the human body—literally and symbolically, onstage and off—in the shape of the doll, its childlike simplicity combining a comforting and seemingly animate charm with an unnerving absence of human personality. Bauhaus dolls of various kinds maintained a playful ambivalence in the face of shifting models of subjectivity, toying with gender ambiguity and engaging with the notion of abstraction both at the level of the individual subject and as a unified group of creatures, delightfully difficult to differentiate. Vessels of empathy and estrangement, they expressed and encouraged a reciprocal relationship between performers and spectators, increasingly

exemplifying the bond between gender and mass culture, to provide models of mass spectatorship for the Weimar Republic.

“The history of the theater is the history of the transfiguration of human form,” Schlemmer asserted in 1925, with “the human being as the actor of physical and spiritual events, alternating between naïveté and reflection, naturalness and artificiality.”⁶ Such contradictory attributes often appeared simultaneously on the Bauhaus stage, where performances combined human subjectivity and its deadpan absence, as seen in a black-and-white photograph taken by Erich Consemüller of Schlemmer’s *Space Dance* in 1926 (Fig. 2). Three figures pose on an otherwise bare stage in padded monochrome unitards indistinguishable in everything but (presumably) color; their feet, in standard-issue dance slippers, appear dainty and petite below their stuffed bodies; and identical masks encase their heads in shiny metallic ovoids painted with wide-eyed expressions of mock surprise. Three hands near the center of the image mark the only areas of visible human flesh, but even these look so rigid as to evoke those of shopwindow mannequins; the calculated angles of the dancers’ arms and legs likewise suggest synthetic limbs. Facing frontally or in profile, the perfectly poised figures lack all trace of individuality, any sense of flesh and blood, or any hint of human skeletons at their core; they seem devoid even of a generic human personality. Their padded bodies, particularly at the hips and crotch, appear female. Underneath the costumes, however, lurk Schlemmer himself (in front on the left) and the dancers Werner Siedhoff and Walter Kaminsky. Conflating “naïveté and reflection, naturalness and artificiality”—to invoke Schlemmer’s terms—they playfully embody a model of human subjectivity that reflects the instability of their era.

The unitards and masks resemble the protective gear of fencers; the poses call to mind the fencing ring or dance studio.⁷ But despite the initial impression they give of active athleticism, the figures also seem like passive objects. They hold static, almost timeless postures, like modern parodies of the statues of ancient Greece that Johann Joachim Winckelmann had famously characterized by a “noble simplicity and a calm greatness, as much in the pose as in the expression.”⁸ The figure on the right especially, with its simplified forms and its arms tucked invisibly behind its back, evokes a ruin with missing limbs and weathered features. “The artificial figure permits any movement, any position for any desired duration,” Schlemmer explained, “it permits—an artistic device from the periods of the greatest art—the variable scale of the figures: significant large, insignificant small.”⁹ Without human faces or individualized bodies, the figures in *Space Dance* are easily read as miniature humans, although the padding enlarges their forms. Comforting and disturbing in equal measure, they simultaneously resemble children’s toys



1 Paul Klee, the idea and structure of the Bauhaus, 1922. Berlin, Bauhaus-Archiv

expanded to adult size and oddly overstuffed little people, in keeping with Schlemmer's declaration in 1930 that representations of the human figure belonged "in the realm of the doll-like."¹⁰ The photograph's uncertainty of scale is meanwhile intensified by the absence of anything else onstage with which to compare the figures, effectively rendering each one an unreliable standard for judging the other two. Receding upstage from left to right, they become smaller, but their heads remain at the same height.

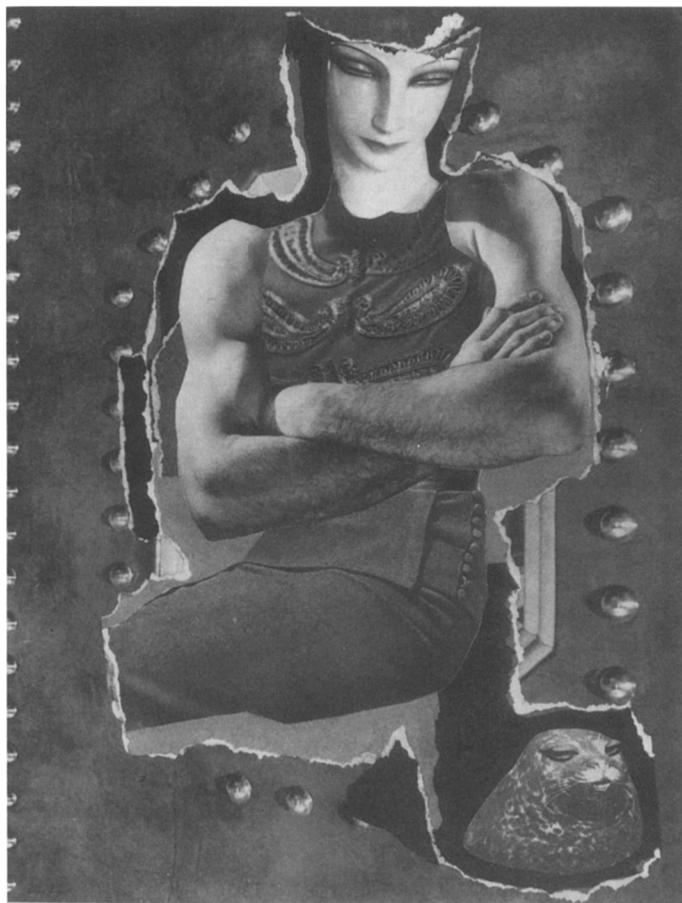
Within the image, the choreography leaves no doubt that the intended spectator is in fact the camera lens; Schlemmer's careful arrangement of the figures onstage coincides precisely with Consemüller's photographic composition. Symmetrically arranged within the frame, shining out from the center of the surrounding darkness, the three heads divide the photograph vertically into four equal areas and horizontally into three, with the dark space behind them—the blank backdrop behind the stage—comprising the top two-thirds of the picture. The bodies are arranged in space, but the image reads as flat; only the straight, deep shadows linking Schlemmer's feet to the center of the horizon line (and the shorter, parallel shadows behind the other figures' feet) suggest recession into depth. The three vertical bod-

ies—and the limbs attached to them—likewise divide the image like the lines of a geometry diagram, despite the figures' apparent difference in size and arbitrary poses. A painted line down the center of the stage floor also bisects the photograph vertically; interrupted by the feet of the central figure (Siedhoff), it continues along his body and through Schlemmer's outstretched hand to end at Siedhoff's artificial head. But Siedhoff's head is also Schlemmer's: identical to that worn by the director, it is made according to his design.

These representations of the human figure in the late 1920s—both the stage image and the photograph—test the limits of recent art historical scholarship in the United States on Weimar subjectivity. Scholarship in this field has concentrated on Dada imagery, robots, and other technological creatures, frequently emphasizing disjuncture of various kinds, from the aesthetics of montage to the prevalence of dismembered bodies in the wake of World War I.¹¹ Following the arguments of the artists themselves, formal disjuncture is often aligned with the politics of resistance, the visible montage fragment treated as a marker of the "real" that questions the logic of representation and thus acts as a destabilizing force in the political, cultural, and social realms.¹² Such an



2 Oskar Schlemmer, *Space Dance*, performed by Schlemmer, Werner Siedhoff, and Walter Kaminsky, Dessau Bauhaus, 1926, photograph by Erich Consemüller. Nachlass Erich Consemüller, Cologne, private collection (from Herzogenrath and Kraus, *Erich Consemüller*, pl. 123)

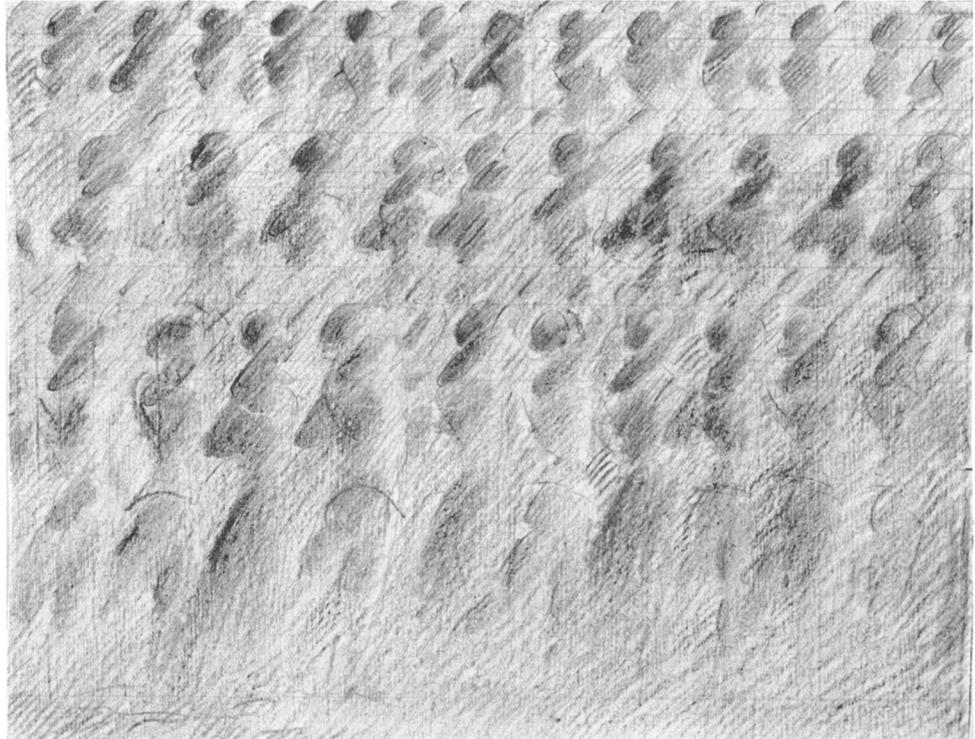


3 Hannah Höch, *Dompteuse (Tamer)*, photomontage with collage, ca. 1930. Kunsthau Zürich, Graphische Sammlung (from Lavin, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife*, 195; © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2003)

equation of aesthetic and political radicalism is often convincing—as, for example, in Hannah Höch's photomontage *Dompteuse (Tamer)*, of about 1930, a willfully uncertain depiction of the Weimar New Woman (Fig. 3). A collation of partial, mismatched, roughly torn images from contemporary magazines, *Dompteuse* shows various accoutrements of control from the circus arena and public life, challenging prevailing notions of idealized feminine beauty and troubling the relation between tamer and tamed.¹³ The equation's inverse—that an aesthetic “return to order” signifies political conservatism—is often equally powerful, with positive images of physical wholeness and the healthy body produced as National Socialist propaganda, as in Leni Riefenstahl's two-part film *Olympia* of 1938.¹⁴

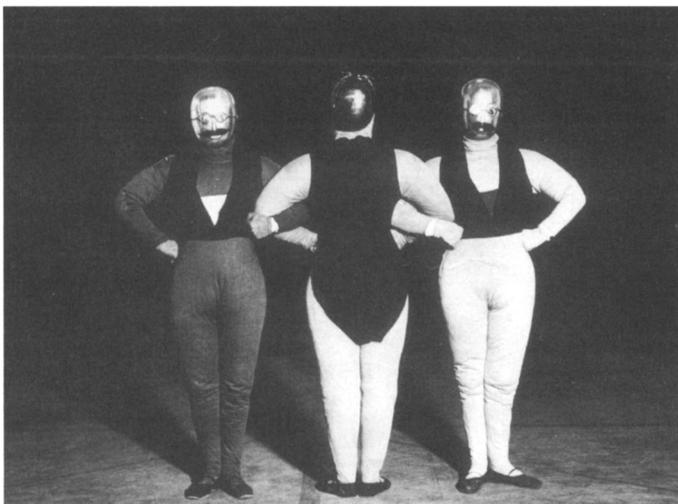
Particularly in contrast to the gritty photomontages of John Heartfield and Höch or the political theater of Bertolt Brecht and Erwin Piscator, it may be tempting to read Schlemmer's creatures, Consemüller's photograph, and Bauhaus dolls generally as ominous harbingers of the National Socialist obsession with physical culture and rationalized subjectivity. Whether openly celebratory of such tendencies or simply blind to political reality, the dolls (by this line of thinking) are, at best, liable to co-optation by right-wing forces; at worst, their physical amplitude and seemingly apolitical posturing prove their guilt. Insistently whole—more than whole—they seem optimistically to embrace the mounting mechanization of Weimar Germany; their robotic poses softened, literally, by their costumes, they stave off the threat of dismemberment with a denial both charming and disquieting. Three more figures, standing proudly with linked arms in Consemüller's photograph of Schlemmer's *Gesture Dance III* in 1927, might be cited as further evidence (Fig. 4). Like a trio of padded fops, Schlemmer, Siedhoff, and Kaminsky here are buried in costumes resembling tuxedos, ostensibly useless spectacles

5 Schlemmer, design for the congress hall in the Deutsches Museum, Munich (*Pastel für einen Wettbewerb*), detail, colored chalk on writing paper, 1934. Munich: Deutsches Museum, private collection (photo: © 2003 Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)



appended to their identical masked heads. They seem blind, deaf, and dumb to the escalating troubles of the Weimar Republic; Siedhoff even faces upstage, turning his back to spectators and camera lens alike—without suffering an ensuing reduction in personality.

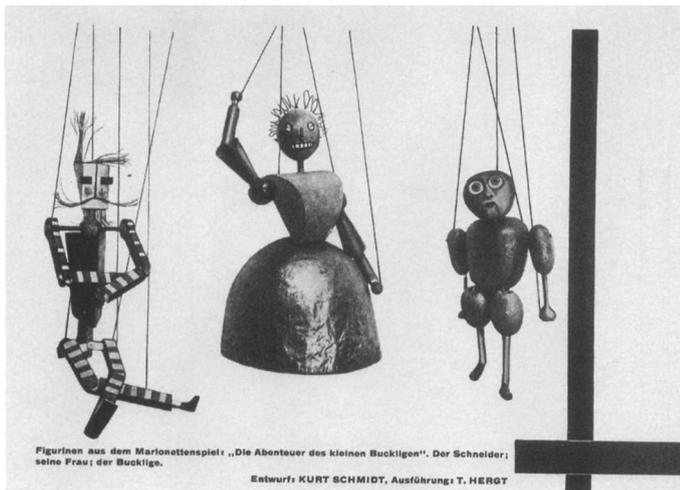
In fact, no amount of padding could protect the inhabitants of the Bauhaus from continuous charges of communist leanings, with their festivities cited as evidence of political radicalism. The Ministry of Culture in Weimar responded to allegations in 1920, for example, that the school was “spartacistic and bolshevistic,” noting that “a complaint has been



4 Schlemmer, *Gesture Dance III* (*Bauhaustänze: Gestentanz*), 1927, photograph by Consemüller. Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer (photo: © 2003 Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

made that the neighborhood of the Bauhaus . . . is often disturbed by noise during the night hours.”¹⁵ While right-wing harassment is no proof of leftist tendencies, Bauhaus activities certainly undermined authority and threatened conservative local governments.¹⁶ Funding in Weimar was canceled in the autumn of 1924, prompting the school’s dissolution the following spring; its Dessau incarnation, begun in 1925, was closed by a bill put forward by the National Socialists in September 1932; and in Berlin the school was shut down by the Nazis after only six months, in April 1933. But despite such ongoing victimization, ample connections exist between the Bauhaus and National Socialism, as recent scholarship attests.¹⁷ Schlemmer’s approving citation of Josef Goebbels in a letter of June 1933 reveals both his own political bent and his sense of the convergence of his life and work: “I consider myself pure, and my art strong,” he declared, “in keeping with nat. soc. principles—namely ‘heroic, steely-romantic, unsentimental, hard, sharp, clear, creative of new types,’ etc.” And one need look no further than Schlemmer’s design, the following year, for a mural for the congress hall in the Deutsches Museum, Munich, to witness the chilling offspring of his earlier dolls (Fig. 5).¹⁸ Roughly sketched in blue and purple chalk, an orderly litter of identical, dark blond women stand in profile, their right arms raised in a Nazi salute. Hailing a greater power that lies beyond our sight, they are unified in a grid of support—although the feminine silhouette of their flowing, floor-length skirts suggests a return to Jugendstil ideals following the androgynous padding of their 1920s forebears.

But while such textual and visual evidence reveals much about Schlemmer in 1933 and 1934, it proves little about the figures he designed in the 1920s. Creative work never merely illustrates a political orientation that has been fully worked through years in advance, and the dolls at the Bauhaus were



6 Kurt Schmidt, design, and T. Hergt, execution, three marionettes (the tailor, his wife, and the hunchback) for *The Adventures of the Little Hunchback* (from Schlemmer et al., 1925, 80)

neither Nazi sympathizers nor leftist troublemakers, neither wholly celebratory nor entirely critical of their environment.¹⁹ The figures in *Space Dance* and *Gesture Dance* demonstrate the danger of applying preconceived equations to works of art in retroactive assessment of protofascist potential. Insistently refusing to postulate a firm stance of any kind, the dolls seem instead to express the profound patience described by Siegfried Kracauer in 1922:

Perhaps the only remaining attitude is one of *waiting*. By committing oneself to waiting, one neither blocks one's path toward faith (like those who defiantly affirm the void) nor besieges this faith. . . . One waits, and one's waiting is a *hesitant openness*, albeit of a sort that is difficult to explain.²⁰

In light of these words, one might view the extraordinary static poses of Schlemmer's theater dolls—their noble simplicity and calm greatness—as uncertain, expectant, and hopeful. Seriously playful creatures, construction sites of modern subjectivity, they might even be seen to embody the synthesis of “the most extreme fantasy with the most extreme sobriety” with which the art critic Franz Roh characterized the technique of photomontage itself in 1925.²¹

Waxworks, dolls, marionettes, and puppets had long substituted for humans in the German literary imagination, famously appearing in the work of E. T. A. Hoffmann and Heinrich von Kleist in the early nineteenth century. “Grace,” Kleist decreed in 1810, “appears purest simultaneously in the human body that has either none at all or else infinite consciousness—that is, in the puppet or god.”²² Such artificial creatures gravitated easily to the stage. In late-nineteenth-century France, for example, Léo Delibes's ballet *Coppélia* (1870) and Jacques Offenbach's opera *The Tales of Hoffmann* (1881) took up these literary precursors, their leading characters melding mechanization and the performance of femininity as if testing a new model of female subjectivity. Replica humans—and female dolls in particular—permeated the visual arts of early-twentieth-century Germany, from the paintings

of the Blaue Reiter to Hans Bellmer's creations and photographs. Such treatments of the relation between subjectivity and objectification occurred with particular fervor after the birth of visual abstraction, as they permitted the continued investigation of human subjectivity despite the demise of figurative painting. “At a certain point in time,” as Walter Benjamin declared in the allusive, telegraphic prose characteristic of his *Arcades* project, “the motif of the doll acquires a sociocritical significance.”²³

At the Bauhaus, dolls of a traditional size were created as well, such as the marionettes designed by Kurt Schmidt for *The Adventures of the Little Hunchback* and pictured in *Die Bühne im Bauhaus* in 1925 (Fig. 6).²⁴ They performed in private and in public, acting as scale models for theater costumes and as miniature people, manipulated by human hands and enjoyed by human spectators. Between 1916 and 1925, Paul Klee created for his son, Felix, a puppet theater with fifty marionettes, including a self-portrait and a “matchbox genie” (Fig. 7). As Felix later reminisced with regard to these creatures, “some hilarious performances were held at the Weimar Bauhaus, during which various confidential matters were aired in an unsparing and sarcastic way, vexing to those concerned and highly amusing to the others.”²⁵ Blending child's play with serious adult activity, performances could serve both as entertainment and as psychological ventilation along the model of Sigmund Freud's “talking cure.” The playfulness of the dolls made by Klee and others in this period suggests a determination to reenchant the world, in keeping with Schlemmer's lament that, outside the Bauhaus, “the materialistic-practical age has certainly lost the genuine feeling for play and wonder. The utilitarian frame of mind is well on the way to killing it.”²⁶ Proudly bearing the marks of their makers' hands, dolls embodied the drive to unify art and craft that governed the Bauhaus in its early years.

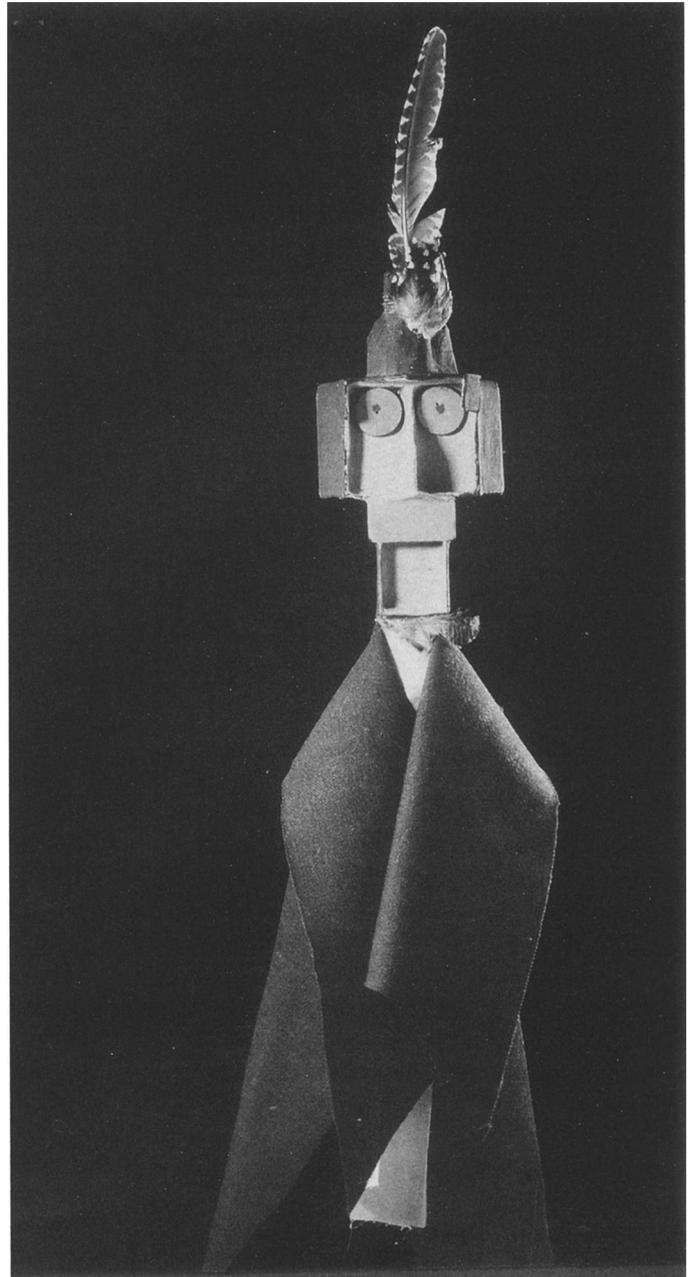
After 1923, however, with the arrival at the school of László Moholy-Nagy—and increasingly after the move to Dessau—technology became the guiding force of Bauhaus creativity, and theater provided an ideal showcase for contending with the body's increasing reification, mechanization, and androgyny.²⁷ “The integration of humans into stage production must not be burdened by the tendency to moralize, nor by any . . . INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMATIC,” Moholy-Nagy argued.²⁸ As if in response, the small, playful objects at the Bauhaus—toys, essentially—grew to human size; their transformation accompanied a change in status, transforming Bauhäuslers into their counterparts on stage. Despite borrowing conceptual authority from their Romantic antecedents, Bauhaus dolls (after the school's initial years) were not marionettes controlled by someone who, as Kleist had written, ideally “imagines himself at the puppet's center of gravity” to create “*the path of the dancer's soul*” in the movement of its limbs.²⁹ The Bauhaus director was now more likely to perform as a doll than to hold its strings behind the scenes. Creator and performer became theoretically interchangeable, dissolving the fundamental distinction between them that the traditional theater maintained both physically and conceptually. And, as performers took on the guise of passive objects, spectators—implicitly—were increasingly rendered their equals.

Unlike the puppet or marionette, the automaton—a machine figure operating as if human, without need of human

assistance—more closely approximates the model of the Bauhaus doll. From the Renaissance to the late nineteenth century, automata had enchanted audiences throughout Europe with mechanical ingenuity and magical performances, demonstrating the wondrous qualities of the modern machine while confirming the mechanistic nature of the human body.³⁰ A Swiss writing automaton from 1773, capable of reproducing a short sentence on a sheet of paper, may be taken as representative (Fig. 8). An astounding replica of human capabilities, it embodies a humanist conception of individuality: civilized, educated, and unique. In his book *Machine Man* of 1747, Julien Offrey de La Mettrie described the activity of spectatorship as a physical reflex. “We take everything—gestures, accents, etc.—from those we live with,” he wrote, “in the same way as the eyelid blinks under the threat of a blow that is foreseen, or as the body of the spectator imitates mechanically, and despite himself, all the movements of a good mime.”³¹ Immersed in the performance, a spectator cannot resist imitating a performer’s movements, even those of an inanimate automaton. Figuratively speaking, the relationship is reciprocal. Just as a spectator mimics the actions of the performer, the latter imitates its spectators, reflecting contemporaneous conceptions of what it means to be human.

“Automata represent the dream, the ideal form, the utopia of the machine,” Jean-Claude Beaune has argued, “the gauge of their absolute perfection is their independence, which endows them from the first with an anthropomorphic or living quality.”³² Like the human model on which it was based, the automaton was essentially individualistic. A suggestion of technical replication combined with the magic of irreproducibility; both as a mechanical invention and as a human substitute, the measure of its success was its uniqueness. “It is often possible to discern some temptation toward group activity” within an automaton, Beaune allows, “but not yet to such an extent as to affect its insularity.”³³ Individual performers in *Space Dance* and *Gesture Dance*, their gestures stiff and machinelike, almost pass for overgrown, padded automata. But despite the morphological resemblance, the model of subjectivity they embody is very different: they belong implicitly within a group of identical creatures. Individual automata would seem to have continued to captivate the Weimar cultural imagination, exemplified, perhaps, by the character Maria in Fritz Lang’s film *Metropolis*, released in early 1927, but even she, as a prototype for later replicas (“we will put one in every factory!”), represents the wondrous potential of serial production. So, too, does the *Steel R.U.R. Automaton* (Fig. 9). The letters emblazoned on his steel chest stand for “Rossum’s Universal Robots,” referring to the 1921 play of that title by Karel Čapek, who introduced the term *robot* in its pages.

By the 1920s, German stages were well prepared for such creatures. The weakened authority of narrative, the disappearance of bourgeois characters on view in the privacy of their own drawing rooms, and the dismantling of the invisible “fourth wall” dividing the stage and auditorium—all provided evidence of the demise of naturalism in the theater, as in literature and the visual arts.³⁴ In Germany and Russia, in particular, performances increasingly emphasized nonrepresentational movement; Schlemmer’s *Gesture Dance* may thus

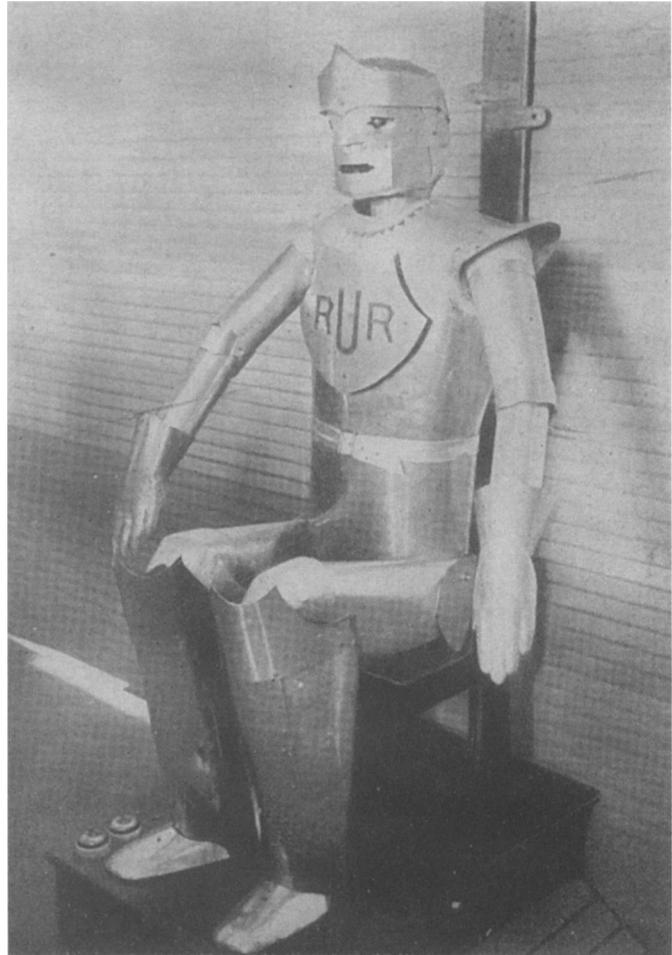


7 Klee, *Matchbox Genie*, matchboxes, feather, 1924. Bern, Klee Museum (from *Paul Klee: Puppen, Plastiken, Reliefs, Masken, Theater*, 81; © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2003)

be seen to stand at the intersection of modern dance and theater as both art forms sought to abandon naturalism, and its attendant psychologist impulses, in favor of abstraction.³⁵ “The theater, the world of appearances, is digging its own grave when it tries for verisimilitude,” Schlemmer asserted in 1922, citing Hoffmann and Kleist with approbation.³⁶ Moholy-Nagy also embraced theatrical abstraction. While commending the Futurists, Expressionists, and Dadaists for helping theater to overturn naturalism’s “predominance of values based exclusively on logic and ideas,” he criticized their reliance on figures based on subjective emotional effects and literary models, demanding instead that a new abstract human be developed for the stage.³⁷ Rather than resting at the top of the theatrical hierarchy, central to the activities on-



8 Pierre-Jacquet Droze and Jean-Frédéric Leschot, writing automaton, 1773. Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Neuchâtel, Switzerland



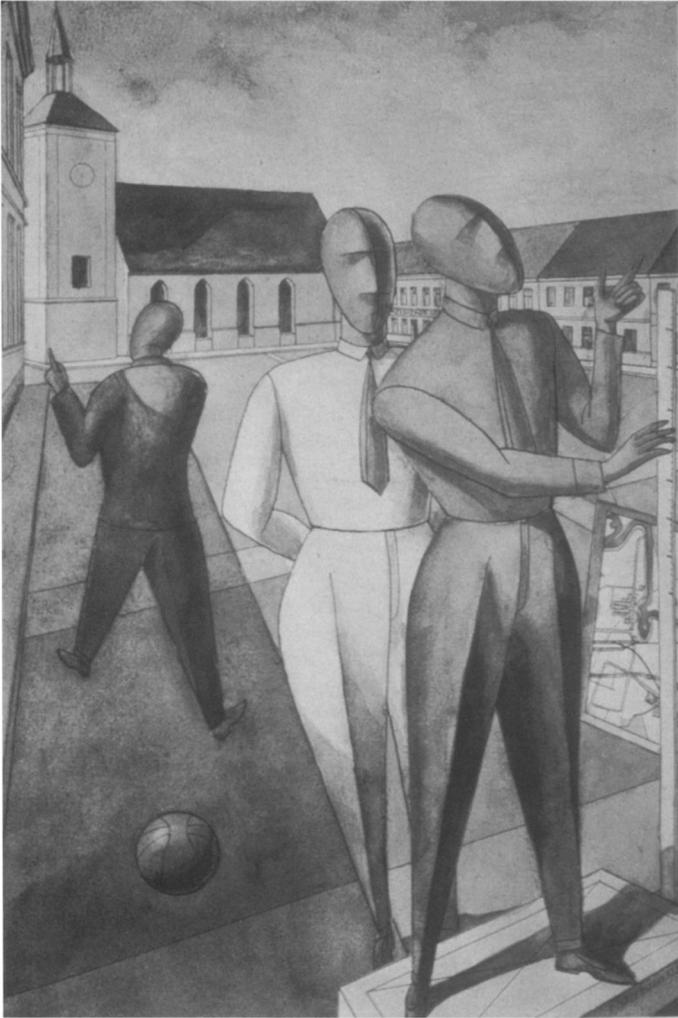
9 Steel R.U.R. Automaton (from *Variétés* 1, no. 9 [1928]: following 480, courtesy of the Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles)

stage, this new model would remain, as he put it, "OF EQUAL VALUE TO THE OTHER CREATIVE MEANS."³⁸ Performers at the Bauhaus were to be rendered abstract both at the level of the individual figure and in groups; such traditional versions of the mechanized body as the automaton would be replaced with a new model, infinitely replicable and potentially universal.

Bauhaus dolls echoed the radical transfiguration of the human subject in early-twentieth-century Germany, when an emphasis on *Sachlichkeit*, or objectivity, joined the potentially universal "urge to abstraction" described by the young art historian Wilhelm Worringer in 1908.³⁹ Following World War I, *neue Sachlichkeit*, or new objectivity, delivered a new creature, one that has been termed posthumanist; drained of psychological autonomy, this Weimar subject—visible in such works as Raoul Hausmann's *The Engineers* of 1920—retained only a lingering pretence of humanist individuality (Fig. 10).⁴⁰ With standardized clothing, bodies, and faces, the engineers present an image of studied efficiency and anonymous uniformity, an effect reinforced by the presence of a ruler and urban plan, as well as by the surrounding urban environment. Simultaneously spontaneous and mechanized, playful and unsettling, their forms increasingly abstract, Bauhaus dolls of this period

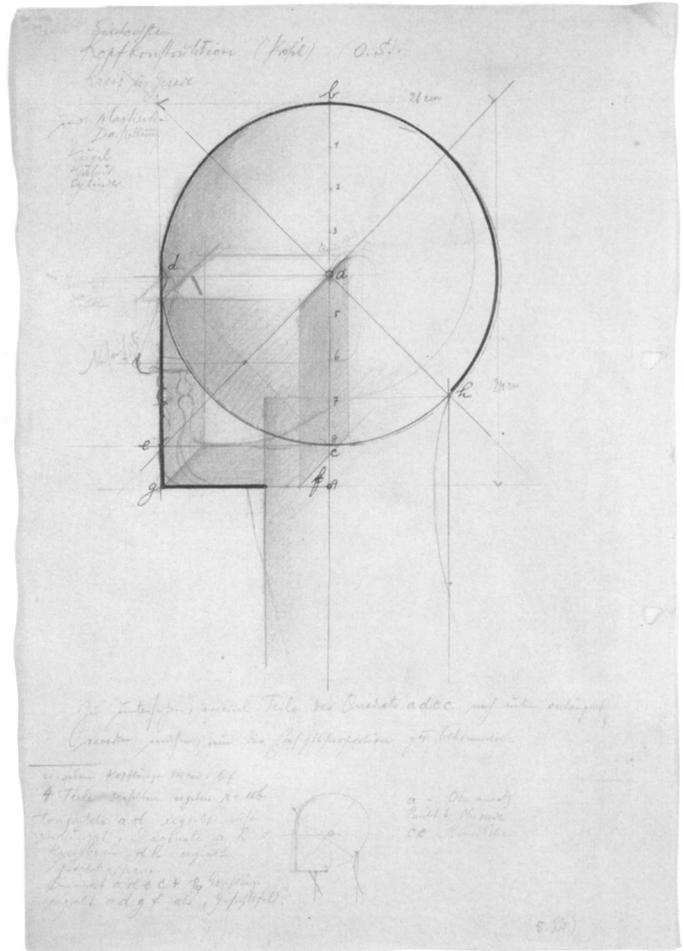
likewise pass for posthumanist. "The sign of our times is *abstraction*," Schlemmer himself declared in 1925, "which, on the one hand, functions to disconnect components from an existing whole, leading them individually *ad absurdum* or elevating them to their greatest potential, and, on the other, results in generalization and summation to create a new whole in bold outline."⁴¹ Abstraction, in other words, helped dismantle a given object—such as the human body—into its constituent elements, rendering each one essentially useless or making it more purely and forcefully itself. At the same time, it provided a new standard in keeping with the new age.

Schlemmer's *Highly Simplified Head (Profile)* from the late 1920s indicates the extent of his fervor for pictorial abstraction (Fig. 11). Reducing the head to two abstract components—a flat circle and a rectangle expanded to three dimensions—the drawing would seem to calculate their structural relation. It also posits a "new whole in bold outline," a radically new model of human subjectivity: devoid of psychology and emotion, absent of all signs of individual identity, it can be measured with the instruments of geometry and, in theory, infinitely reproduced by machine. For Schlemmer, this achievement was only to be admired. "Because the *abstraction* of the human form . . . creates an image in a higher sense,"



10 Raoul Hausmann, *The Engineers*, watercolor, 1920. Milan, Arturo Schwarz Collection (from Timothy Benson, ed., *Expressionist Utopias: Paradise, Metropolis, Architectural Fantasy* [Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001], 49; © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2003)

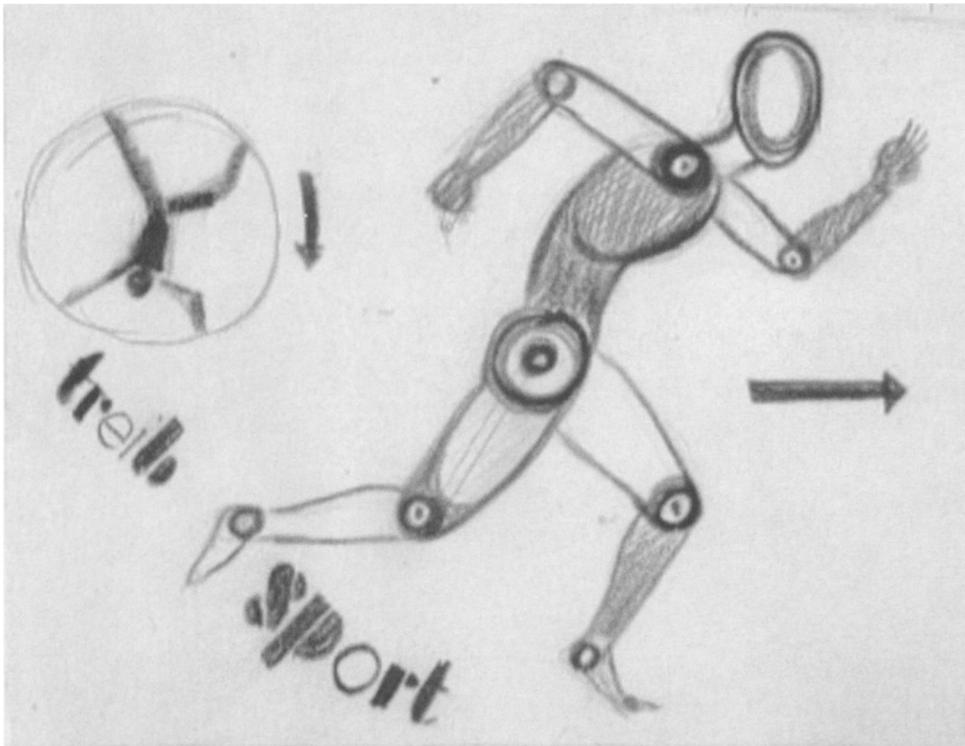
he maintained in 1930, “it does *not* create a *natural human being*, but an *artificial one*; it creates a *metaphor*, a *symbol* of human form . . .”⁴² In the history of the transfiguration of the human form, this symbolic figure surpassed the limits of naturalism, providing an abstract, artificial model prepared for the challenges and delights of the posthumanist era. A drawing from about 1932 by Joost Schmidt, who was attached to the Bauhaus throughout its years in Weimar and Dessau (initially as Schlemmer’s student and subsequently as a master), shows the active potential of this new artificial human (Fig. 12). Its head is a blank oval, its body a set of abstract forms joined by means of circular pivots. Unlike the more traditional body that tumbles uncontrollably in a circle at the left in the drawing, this figure is shown by means of a bold arrow to proceed directly forward into the future. One suspects that some human dolls designed at the Bauhaus were inspired by the wooden figures that were used in drawing classes in place of traditional nude models, as seen in a contemporaneous photograph taken by Alfred Eisenstaedt of a Bauhaus drawing class (Fig. 13). Looming over the five students gathered attentively below, the artificial figure ap-



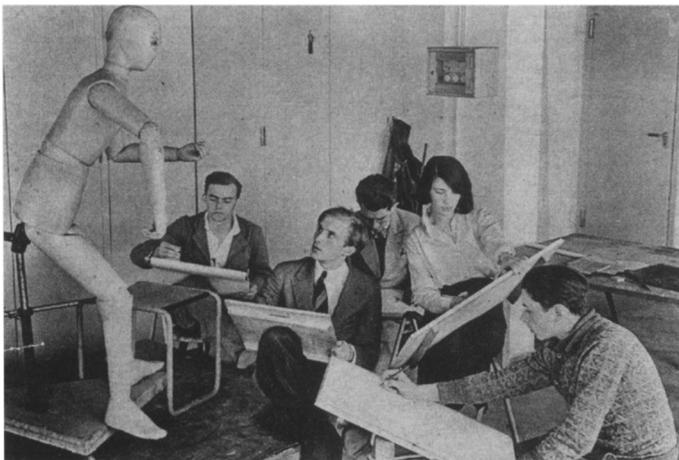
11 Schlemmer, *Highly Simplified Head Construction (Profile)* (*Einfache Kopfkonstruktion [Profil] aus dem Bauhauskurs ‘Der Mensch’*), pencil and ink, 1928. Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer, Collection U. Jaina Schlemmer (photo: © 2003, Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

pears, as it were, larger than life. Cause and effect are inextricable; given this image, it is little wonder the human doll would set the standard for human subjectivity.

A photograph by Consemüller from 1925–26 presents this new figure, the human doll, and exemplifies the impossibility of distinguishing Bauhaus life from performance, identity from anonymity (Fig. 14). Stylishly dressed in the fashion of the day, a woman reclines in a tubular steel armchair designed by Marcel Breuer. The surrounding room is empty, with the floor beneath her and the wall behind her cleared of other objects, as if she were placed on a bare stage in preparation for the photographic performance. Her dress, designed without curves, was made by Lis Beyer in the Bauhaus weaving workshop; her shoes epitomize elegance. Her head a Schlemmer mask, she gazes benignly, blankly, and directly at the camera. Her upper torso and head face the camera, but with her right elbow casually resting on the arm of the chair and her right leg crossed over the left—a strikingly modern pose—visual access to her body is impeded. Her Bauhaus environment has encased and absorbed her: chair, dress, head. She is clearly female, but her slim body, ovoid head,



12 Joost Schmidt, *Der Läufer*, ca. 1932. Los Angeles, Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, acc. no. 800972



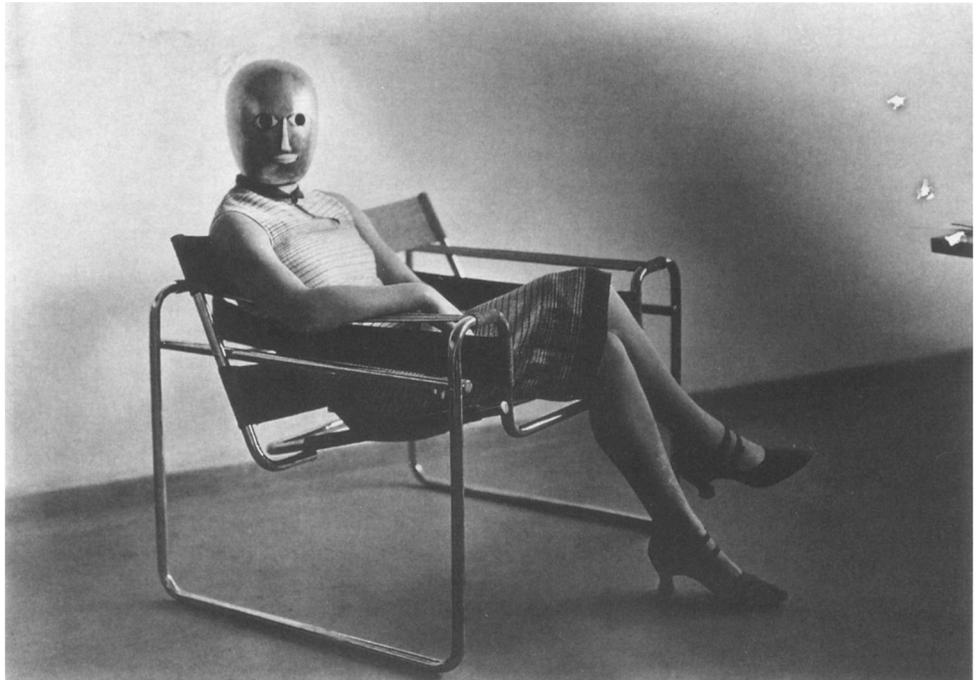
13 Alfred Eisenstaedt, *Drawing Class using a Movable Model*, ca. 1932. Berlin, Bauhaus-Archiv

and the pared-down fashions of the Weimar New Woman all suggest androgyny, reproducing the effect of Schlemmer's padded dolls from the other side of the gender divide. She is in fact anonymous, currently documented only as either Beyer herself or Ise Gropius, who was known to possess the dress.⁴³ That the figure cannot be identified, rather than detracting from the documentary value of the photograph, certifies a central feature of Bauhaus life: the defining presence of the doll, seemingly female and certainly anonymous.

Three photographs taken in the late 1920s illustrate the pronounced interest in androgyny at the Bauhaus. In one, two students—one male, one female—sport similar haircuts and spectacles; photographed from above, they are shown lying down with their heads angled toward each other, the tips of their cigarettes meeting in an ashy kiss (Fig. 15). Boy and girl are almost identical; the modern habit of smoking

links them physically and symbolically, marking the sexual spark between them like the “equal” sign in a mathematical equation. Another photograph, taken by Umbo (Otto Umbehr), shows a row of four seated women, equally stylish from their haircuts to their shoes, posed almost identically (Fig. 16). Their heads slightly tilted and their hands almost on their hearts, they parody a cliché of maidenly sentimentality. Three of them cross their legs, but one does not—and the disparity, intentional or not, threatens to break down the machine of modern femininity. The third photograph is a self-conscious self-portrait of pensive solitude (Fig. 17). Her hair also in a fashionable, mannish bob, Ise Gropius has used the reflections of a mirror to repeat her own image infinitely, as if internalizing the seriality of the posing women. At the Bauhaus as elsewhere in the Weimar Republic, the New Woman embraced *neue Sachlichkeit*.⁴⁴ Drained of psychological autonomy and individualism, she allowed the trappings of androgyny to transfer her from the realm of sexual reproduction to that of serial production.

The advent of *neue Sachlichkeit* and the birth of the posthumanist subject intensified the attention to doll figures while shifting the focus from individual replicas to figural groups. With the rise of the mass audience, and in conjunction with the emerging machine aesthetic, the individual body lost its value as the privileged site of human identity. It was replaced in the Weimar cultural imagination by the corporate body, a group entity comprising a set of identical forms operating mechanistically, in unison. The mechanical woman of the late nineteenth century had transmogrified into a larger performing machine, an elaborate configuration composed of mechanized female bodies. The urge to abstraction thus inspired the mass ornamental designs—chorus lines of identical creatures, almost always female—that Kracauer described as “indissoluble girl clusters whose movements are



14 Consemüller, photograph of a woman wearing a Schlemmer mask at the Dessau Bauhaus, 1925–26. Nachlass Erich Consemüller, Cologne, private collection (from Herzogenrath and Kraus, *Erich Consemüller*, pl. 1; photo: © Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin)



15 Photograph of Gerhard Kadow and Else Franke, 1929. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum

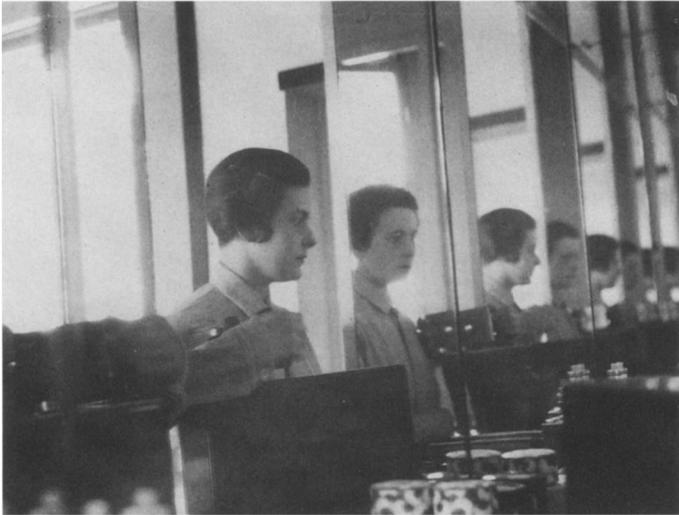


16 Umbo (Otto Umbehr), *Posierende Mädchen* (Girls posing), 1927. Berlin, Berlinische Galerie, Photographische Sammlung

demonstrations of mathematics.”⁴⁵ The new human dolls acquired their significance in groups, gaining identity by association; those who “consider themselves to be unique personalities with their own individual souls,” Kracauer added, “fail when it comes to forming these new patterns.”⁴⁶ Chorus lines sometimes provided a literal model for Bauhaus hijinks, as in a photograph taken by Irene Bayer in the mid-1920s (Fig. 18). Fourteen male figures—all slender and boyish, all wearing bathing costumes, some with hats, the first (Xanti Schawinsky) holding aloft a woman’s sun parasol—kick back their heels in an impressive, messy row. “One need only glance” at a chorus line, Kracauer believed, “to learn that the ornaments are composed of thousands of bodies, sexless bodies in bathing suits. The regularity of their patterns is cheered by the masses, themselves arranged by the stands in tier upon ordered tier.”⁴⁷ Here, the spirited conflation of participation and performance faces the camera lens,

that singular mechanical spectator standing in for the expanded photographic audience.

If the camera’s presence could gather a group of people into a chorus line, photography as a medium likewise structured Bauhaus activities, inspiring a wide variety of experimental activity. Dolls cavorted on the exterior architecture of the Dessau Bauhaus as often as they appeared in its indoor theater. They perched on several levels of the building in *The Building as Stage*, for example, a photograph taken by Lux Feininger in 1927 (Fig. 19). Generally reproduced (as here) with the lowermost figure cropped from the image, the original photograph contains five human dolls, each one standing on its own architectural platform, while a sculpted head gazes blindly from the building’s penultimate story.⁴⁸ Each figure, enclosed in its costume and holding aloft at least one large and unwieldy prop, seems simultaneously expressive and speechless, communicative and dumb. Both on and off



17 Ise Gropius, *Self-Portrait*, 1927. Berlin, Bauhaus-Archiv



18 Irene Bayer, *On the Beach at Mulde*, 1926–27. Berlin, Bauhaus-Archiv

the stage, Bauhaus dolls proved remarkably photogenic, as seen in an image commemorating a performance of Schlemmer's *Triadic Ballet* at the Metropol Theater in Berlin in 1926 (Fig. 20). A visual cacophony of bulbous forms and geometric shapes encases the bodies of eight performers, suppressing their individual identities and personalities. Their limbs and torsos are held at awkward angles; their gestures seem to have been inspired by the movements of modern machinery. But the sense of functionalism is undermined both by their whimsical costumes and their careful arrangement before the camera, rather than in relation to one another. Compositionally attractive as a group, they are unconvincing as robots or as a potential machine. Overall, the effect is one of uncontrollable exuberance, not rationalized efficiency.

The existential groundwork for these new figures had already been laid a decade earlier, in 1914, when Rainer Maria Rilke articulated the viewer's ambivalent relation to the figure of the doll. "At a time when everyone still tried hard to answer us quickly and soothingly," Rilke wrote,

it, the doll, was the first to inflict on us that larger-than-life silence that later wafted over us again and again from



19 *The Building as Stage (Der Bau als Bühne)*, 1927, photograph by Lux Feininger. Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer, (photo: © 2003, Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

space when somewhere we approached the frontiers of our existence. Across from it, while it stared at us, we first experienced (or am I mistaken?) that hollowness of feeling, that heart pause, in which one would perish if the whole of gently persistent nature did not lift one, like a lifeless thing, over abysses.⁴⁹

Owing to its extraordinary capacity to absorb empathy, Rilke writes, the doll is the first figure to impose on a child the experience of estrangement. Staring blankly, it offers a comforting presence while cruelly inflicting a silence both uncomprehending and incomprehensible. A pivotal figure in human development, the doll prefigures relationships with others and, subsequently and figuratively, with the spaces of architecture and the world. Its Bauhaus incarnations were similarly passive but capable of provoking intense emotional responses. Their padded bodies and masked heads simulta-

neously endearing and alienating, they provided a sentimental education for their audience, encouraging both emotional engagement and the absence of feeling.

Rather than describing opposing models of subjectivity among spectators and the objects of their attention, empathy and estrangement exist on a theoretical continuum, each one implying the other's presence. Afforded their historical specificity, they connote more than generic attraction and repulsion; rather, they are embedded within several decades of discussion concerning the nature and function of the work of art and the aesthetic response it elicited. In 1873, the young German philosopher Robert Vischer explained that the viewer's body "unconsciously projects its own bodily form—and with this also the soul—into the form of the object," a process from which, he wrote, "I derived the notion that I call 'empathy,'" or *Einfühlung* (literally, the viewer's "feeling into" an object).⁵⁰ Over the following decades, empathy theory appeared within a range of disciplines, including aesthetic philosophy, perceptual psychology, and visual and architectural theory. Various descriptions of the perception of space and form, it presented aesthetic experience as an embodied vision that helped create the work of art. In 1961, Gropius evoked the concept, claiming that Schlemmer "experienced space not only through mere vision but with the whole body, with the sense of touch, of the dancer and the actor," before making the reference explicit: "With empathy, he would sense the directions and dynamics of a given space and make them integral parts of his mural compositions—as, for instance, in the Bauhaus buildings in Weimar."⁵¹

However, the process of aesthetic empathy experienced by Weimar audiences differed from that of the nineteenth-century spectator, whom theorists had treated as a solitary male viewer, his cultivated soul transported by a unique work of art within a tranquil environment. With the emergence of the modern mass audience and the newly developed media it attended—in particular, the cinema, which absorbed the attention of women as well as men—ideas about spectatorship and the construction of modern subjectivity underwent continual reconfiguration. By the early twentieth century, empathy had fallen from favor among psychologists and aesthetic theorists alike, owing partly to experimental research that found perceptual differences among its subjects. The concept was soon recoded as passive, describing an uncreative process of identification to which weak-willed audiences easily and happily succumbed. If the fully empathetic individual spectator of the nineteenth century had proven his profundity by "losing himself," as it were, in the privacy of his own home, the mass audience was now sometimes accused of empathizing too much. Benjamin would claim in 1936, "He who concentrates before the work of art becomes absorbed within it; he enters into this work. By contrast, the distracted mass absorbs the work of art into itself."⁵² The absorption of the isolated individual, requiring time and erudition, was thought to lift the viewer to the nobler plane of art appreciation, while the masses—an undifferentiated group whose proletarian tastes inspired an aesthetic of reproducible objects—lowered the work of art to their own cultural level.

Concurrent with the advent of *neue Sachlichkeit* in the 1920s, the aesthetic experience of the mass audience came to be described more positively—to be valued, that is, as much for



20 *The Triadic Ballet* as part of the revue *Metropolis Again* (*Das Triadische Ballett als Teil der Revue "Wieder Metropol"*), Metropol Theater, Berlin, 1926. Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer (photo: © 2003, Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

its capacity to induce critical thinking as for its radical political potential. Brecht's concept of *Verfremdung* (alienation or estrangement), for example, developed both theoretically and theatrically, interrupted sustained absorption to render the familiar strange and, in the process, to construct a spectator who was actively engaged intellectually.⁵³ Directly opposing the concept of estrangement in Brecht's schema, empathy represented a traditional, passive model of bourgeois spectatorship.⁵⁴ Where empathy encouraged emotional transport, estrangement prevented such passive spectatorship, maintaining the audience's critical awareness of its distance from the work of art. The intermittent use of estrangement, Brecht argued, was "necessary to avoid the intoxicating effects of illusion," to prevent the audience from becoming too absorbed by the aesthetic experience.⁵⁵ However, as he acknowledged in his journals, both techniques were necessary to achieve theatrical success.⁵⁶ Estrangement was impossible without the intermittent presence of empathy—as the dolls at the Bauhaus, of course, were well aware.

Moholy-Nagy's discussion of the mechanical stage figures of Futurism, Expressionism, and Dada reveals the extent to which the intertwined models of empathy and estrangement—identification and shock—were expressed and encouraged by the performing bodies of the 1920s: "The effect of this bodily mechanics," he wrote, "essentially lies in the spectator being astonished or startled by the possibilities of his own organism as demonstrated to him by others."⁵⁷ Reproducing the machine in human form, such robots replaced the bourgeois characters of the naturalist stage with mechanical creatures. Yet as literal representations of modern mechanization, he believed, they still relied on the traditional technique of empathy. Spectators would identify their own bodies with those onstage, recognizing their differences with a pleasant *frisson* of shock. By contrast, the figures he demanded (and that Schlemmer and others would design)

represented posthumanism at a symbolic level. Rather than simply reflecting modern machines literally, through their forms, Bauhaus dolls absorbed them into their structures. They did so both individually, through gesture, and—more crucially—at the level of the group. Individual dolls could be invested with personality by empathetic viewers; gathered together in photographs or on the stage, they formed the quintessential objects of estrangement. Trained by dolls to understand their own posthuman potential, spectators learned to discard their individuality and join the mass audience.

Surrogates of human *Sachlichkeit* onstage faced the *sachlich* humans in the audience: mirror images so interchangeable as to render the orchestra pit almost obsolete. Benjamin, expert equally in allegorical drama and children's toys, went so far as to claim that, in the auditoriums of the Weimar Republic, "the abyss that separates the players from the audience like the dead from the living . . . has become functionless."⁵⁸ Kracauer, too, noted the trend, writing in 1926 that "the surface glamour of the stars, films, revues, and spectacular shows" in Berlin mirrored its viewers' shallow collective consciousness. "Here, in pure externality," he explained, "the audience encounters itself; its own reality is revealed in the fragmented sequence of splendid sense impressions."⁵⁹ Like Benjamin—but with an ambivalence that stemmed from his own appreciation of the movies—Kracauer opposed such effortless viewing habits to the intense absorption of the traditional spectator. He ascribed the change in spectatorship to a change in spectators themselves, citing especially the increased number of salaried workers, the growing presence of women in the workforce, and the exacerbation of capitalism's rationalizing impulses.⁶⁰ In Kracauer's view, women visiting the cinema on their evenings off work were particularly prone to the shallow pleasures and perils of distraction. "Furtively," he wrote, with a combination of sympathy, snobbery, and sexism, "the little shopgirls wipe their eyes and quickly powder their noses before the lights go up" at the end of each film.⁶¹ His opinions were prompted not only by actual changes in the composition of audiences but also by the widespread tendency, in the Weimar Republic as elsewhere, to treat mass culture as female—in its models of spectatorship no less than the objects of its attention.⁶²

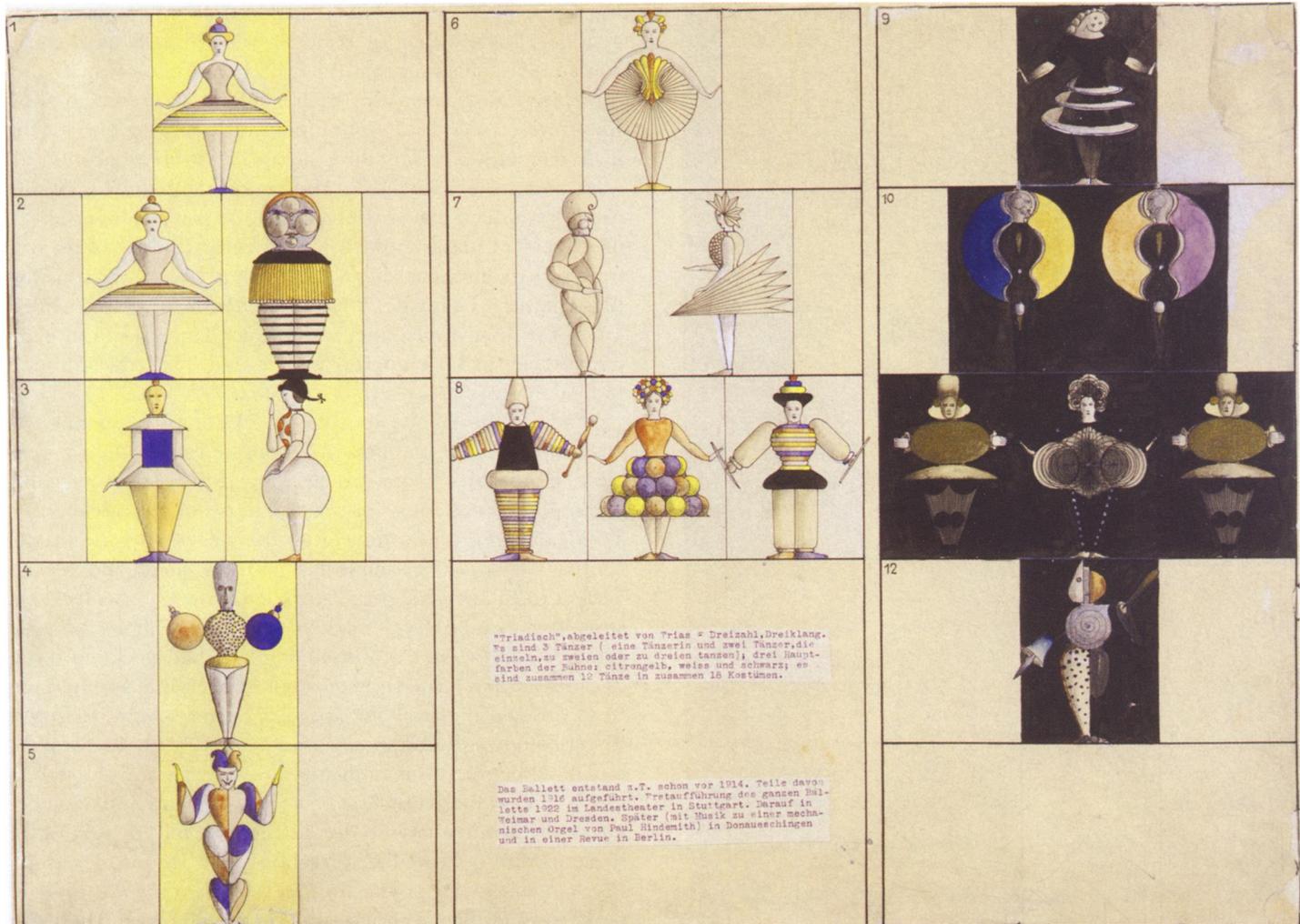
Bauhaus performances occurred in a remarkable variety of venues, from the experimental stage of the Dessau building to its balconies and roofs, where students and masters cavorted before the camera both in and out of costume—or from the German National Theater in Weimar, where the *Triadic Ballet* appeared as the culminating event of the celebrations of Bauhaus week in August 1923, to the unbuilt designs for theaters for mass audiences. The *Triadic Ballet* nevertheless remains the production most often associated with the school; begun by Schlemmer in 1912 and first presented in full at the Landestheater in Stuttgart ten years later, the project was reincarnated several times over the course of the following decade to critical and popular acclaim. In addition to the Stuttgart and Weimar productions, others took place in Dresden, Donaueschingen, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Paris, some as full-length performances and others within larger revues.⁶³ Delighted by the favorable response, Schlemmer transcribed some reviews into his diary for fur-

ther analysis.⁶⁴ "The Triadic Ballet," he explained in an essay of 1926, "which avoids being actually mechanical or actually grotesque and which avoids actual pathos and heroism by keeping to a certain harmonious mean, is part of a larger entity—a 'metaphysical revue'—to which the theoretical investigations and the actual work of the Bauhaus stage at Dessau are also related."⁶⁵ The absence at the Bauhaus of any strict demarcation between traditional theater performances and more general theatrical experimentation helps to explain the presence of the work's costumes in a range of photographs unconnected to particular productions, with *The Building as Stage* offering only one of many examples.

Schlemmer laid out one version of the play's structure in a drawing of 1926, arranging the acts into columns, each divided horizontally into numbered scenes (Fig. 21).—The tripartite structure of the *Triadic Ballet*—performed by three dancers, two men and a woman—contained three acts with five, three, and four scenes, respectively. (This structure was variable; the three acts of the Weimar production in 1923, for example, contained six, three, and three scenes, respectively.) The three features of the ballet, according to Schlemmer, were "the costumes which are of a colored, three-dimensional design, the human figure which is an environment of basic mathematical shapes, and the corresponding movements of that figure in space."⁶⁶ He also considered the "fusion of the dance, the costumes, and the music" to operate triadically, an association perhaps more wisely ascribed to his own tendency to think in threes. In his plan, the characters appear either frontally or in profile, equal in height to the rectangles that contain them, which are painted yellow, white, and black, according to the dominant color of each act. The fanciful, brightly colored costumes are composed of circles, spheres, triangles, and spirals; the padded forms with masks and hats appear inflatable. The symmetrical bodies seem no less abstract; stilted postures render limbs unlimber. Whimsical and awkward, the figures evoke marionettes, circus clowns, and the ultimate machine creatures of the 1920s.

Overall, the performance described the trajectory of dance history, leading from a relatively traditional dance in the first scene of act 1 to a dance of pure movement in the last scene of the third act. It traveled, in other words, from naturalism to abstraction, its sequence of costumes proceeding from almost human to thoroughly artificial. The first scene was performed by a female dancer wearing a modified ballerina's tutu; the third-act finale by a solitary creature with a spiral for a chest, a face composed of three nonrepresentational forms (all sharing one eye), and outstretched arms that brandished the tip of a spear and a rounded stick. This latter figure—whom Schlemmer labeled "the abstract"—exceeds the boundaries of its rectangle, as if breaking through the realm of representation at the end of the performance, into the world beyond.⁶⁷ An entire production of the *Triadic Ballet* thus appears within a grid; each row depicts, at a glance, the characters, costumes, and background color of each scene, with intermissions occurring, as it were, between the columns.

Beyond its utilitarian function, the design of the drawing is doubly significant at the level of its structure. First, rather than providing traditional diagrams of stage blocking—aerial views of the characters onstage—the rectangular images

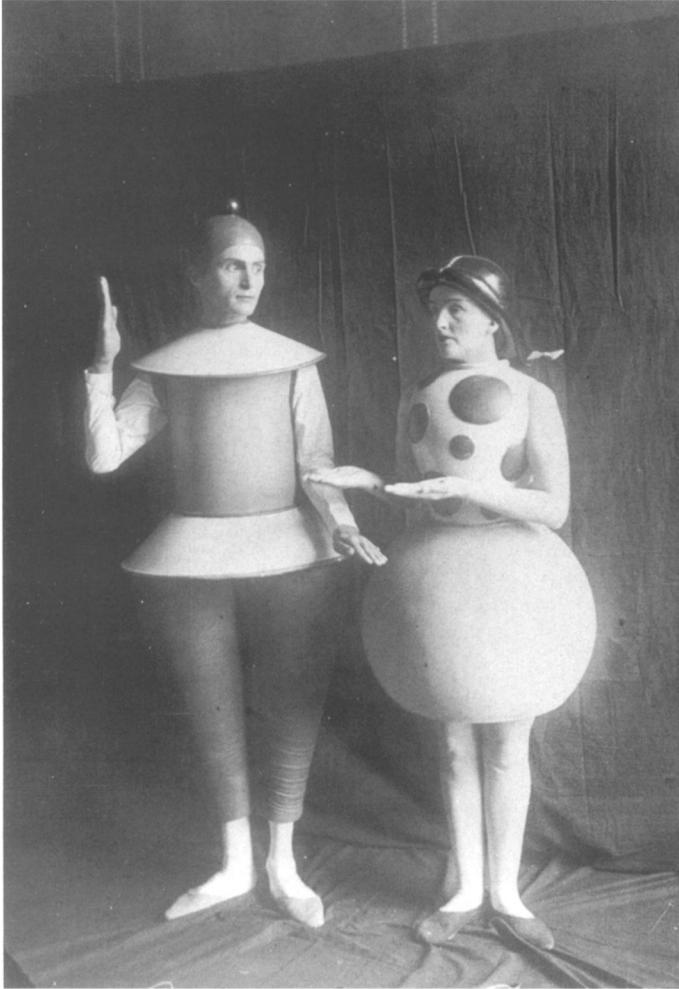


21 Schlemmer, figure plan for *The Triadic Ballet*, india ink, watercolor, zinc white, and bronze on paper, 1926. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Art Museums (© 2003, Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

present frontal views in a vertical sequence; individual scenes are legible from top to bottom. Using traditional artistic media (ink and watercolor on paper), in other words, the depiction operates like three reels of film, evoking what was at the time the most technically advanced form of visual representation. The affinity of Bauhaus dolls for photography is here set in motion; if these abstracted figures were to feel at home in any context, it might well be that of the cinema, the exalted medium of the age of mechanical reproducibility. Shadow puppets of the machine age, they embody the existential shallowness of celluloid modernity. At the same time, they appear fundamentally incapable of feeling "at home" anywhere, exuding instead a sense of the uncanny as it was articulated by Freud in 1919. "The uncanny [*Unheimlich*] is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar," Freud argued, describing the double sensation of familiarity and strangeness.⁶⁸ Adorably animistic and uncomfortably inhuman, eerily charming, the dancing Weimar bodies of Schlemmer's drawing offer, simultaneously, the familiar playfulness of dolls and the sinister hollowness of mechanical creatures.

The logic of the film strip operates in tandem with a second structural feature of Schlemmer's drawing, which not

only re-creates human bodies as dolls in the individual depictions but also reproduces this new creature at another scale. The first and third acts each form larger figures, their bodies outlined by the colored backgrounds of the individual scenes. A yellow figure at the left, the height of the page itself, stands to attention with its arms at its sides: its head consists of the dancer in the first scene, its torso a perfect rectangle of four figures, and its legs the two soloists of the act's final scenes. The black figure at the right, meanwhile, four rectangles high, possesses a head and feet of equal size and a triangular body in between, with two identical dancers surmounting three more standing symmetrically below. Read in this way, the ballet's first and third acts form the bodies of, respectively, a man and a woman. He stands like a rectangular robot. She has breasts formed by the halos behind the upper bodies of the two dancers in scene 2; the metal winding in spirals around the female dancer at the center of scene 3—the "wire figure"—suggests pubic hair above the dotted lines that delineate, simultaneously, her legs and the crotch of the larger figure. Viewed in this context, the little dolls in each scene may be considered ideal participants in the mass ornamental forms that, as Kracauer wrote, "are never performed by the fully preserved bodies, whose contortions are



22 *The Triadic Ballet*, two figures from the yellow row, act 1, scene 3 duet (*Das Triadische Ballett, zwei Figurinen aus der Gelben Reihe, 3. Auftritt, Zweitanz*), performed by Albert Burger and Elsa Hötzel, Landestheater, Stuttgart, 1922. Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer (photo: © 2003, Bühnen Archiv Oskar Schlemmer / The Oskar Schlemmer Theatre Estate, IT—28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy, Photo Archive C. Raman Schlemmer, 28824 Oggebbio [VB], Italy)

the smallest component parts of the composition.⁶⁹ Between the yellow man and the black woman, meanwhile, the scenes of the second act (with one, two, and three dancers, respectively) together form an equilateral triangle, a visual triad symbolizing the ballet's overall schema. Below this platonic shape are glued two paragraphs of typed text: notes on the ballet's formal components and performance history.⁷⁰

In Stuttgart in 1922, Schlemmer played one of the parts of the *Triadic Ballet*; Albert Burger and Elsa Hötzel, partners in dance as in marriage who had appeared together in the ballet before, filled the two main roles. A photograph shows the two performing the third dance in the first act, a duet accompanied by the music of Marco Enrico Bossi (Fig. 22). Their feet turned out in classic ballet position, their expressions stark like those of pantomime figures, and their arms gesticulating woodenly, Burger and Hötzel are formally linked but do not seem to interact. In their polka-dotted, bulbous, or cylindrical costumes, they are uncanny but appealing, human yet mechanical; they are simultaneously dolls reconceived in

human size and humans re-created as dolls. A confusion over gender parallels that of scale: if it is initially unclear in Schlemmer's diagram that the cylindrical figure is male and the spherical one female (their genders are reversed from the previous scene), the photograph is easily legible, yet the male dancer wears something akin to a tutu both around his waist and around his neck. The gender ambiguity is significant; in his diary that year Schlemmer registered his approval of the use of masks and his nostalgia for the use of men to represent women onstage: "Dates that historians consider high points," he wrote, "should rather be called declines: 1681, the first appearance of female dancers—until then female roles had been performed by men. 1772, the abolition of face masks."⁷¹

"Today the arts exist in isolation," Gropius proclaimed in 1919 in the initial Bauhaus program; he found this a regrettable condition, "from which they can be rescued only through the conscious, cooperative effort of all craftsmen."⁷² To idealize the unification of all the arts in early-twentieth-century Germany was almost a cultural cliché, heavily indebted to Richard Wagner's formulation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the exalted total work of art. "The highest shared artwork is the *Drama* . . ." the composer had declared seven decades earlier; "true Drama is only conceivable as emerging from the *shared urge on the part of all the arts* toward the most direct communication to a shared *public*."⁷³ One might draw a parallel between this unification of the arts and the way in which the umbrella structure of the general introductory course at the Bauhaus sheltered the specialized training of students within particular workshops.⁷⁴ "Together, let us desire, conceive, and create the new structure of the future," Gropius entreated, echoing the composer's formulation of "the artwork of the future" from his essay of that title.⁷⁵

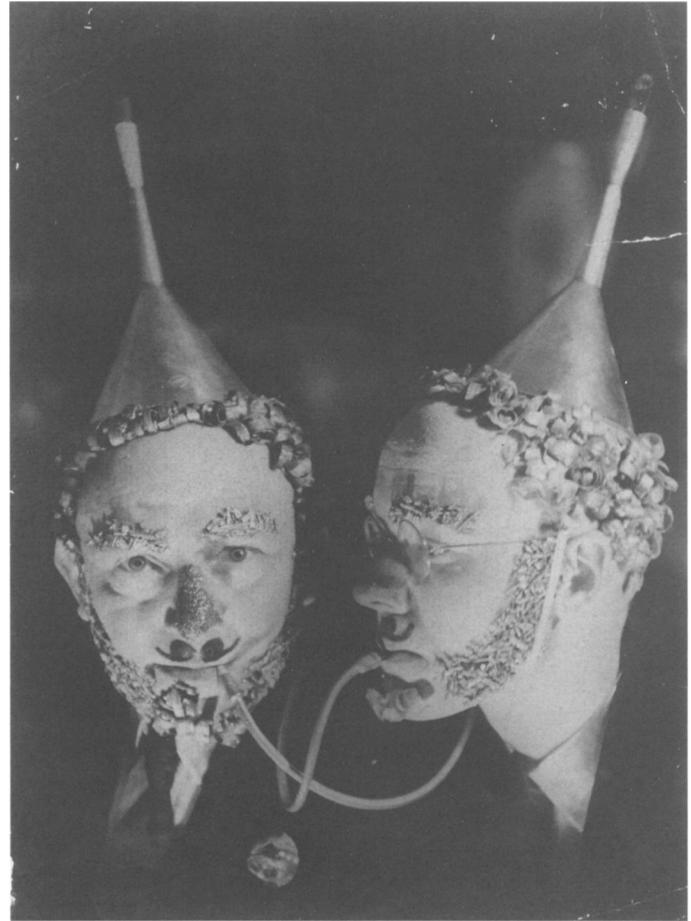
Wagnerian echoes overlapped with those of the composer's erstwhile disciple, Friedrich Nietzsche, whose importance for artistic thinking in Germany in the early twentieth century (and particularly in Weimar, where his archives were located) was unrivaled. As Count Harry Kessler, one of the city's leading cultural figures, stated categorically, "The way in which Nietzsche influenced, or more precisely possessed, us cannot be compared with the effect of any other contemporary figure or poet."⁷⁶ By 1919, the creative, internationalist idol of prewar Germany had become a cult figure of right-wing nationalism, but pan-Nietzschean sentiments continued to captivate Germans across the political spectrum. A romantic Nietzscheanism lurked at the Weimar Bauhaus, inhabiting the souls of its artistically inclined idealists. Gropius, no exception to this tendency, advocated the "mutual planning of extensive, Utopian structural designs—public buildings and buildings for worship—aimed at the future," but he posited churches, not theaters, as the communally constructed buildings that would incorporate all forms of art. Omitting both theater architecture and such subsidiary arts as costume and set design, stage decor painting, and the making of props, the program mentioned performance only in the context of extracurricular entertainment: "Encouragement of friendly relations between masters and students outside of work; therefore plays, lectures, poetry, music, costume parties."⁷⁷

Exactly as Gropius decreed, theatrical events ranging from

plays to costume parties, from organized fetes to spontaneous festivities, operated as essential binding agents for social life at the Bauhaus. "We worked on them as if obsessed," Felix Klee later recalled; "Oskar Schlemmer presented his stage plays especially for them. On May 18 we celebrated Walter Gropius's birthday. Every year was the traditional lantern party."⁷⁸ Wassily Kandinsky's acquisition of German citizenship in early 1928 provided another occasion for a celebration, which he attended wearing traditional German *Lederhosen*. Parties dissolved the boundaries between spectators and performers, with all in attendance taking part in the larger spectacle. At a professional level, they provided innumerable opportunities for the design of invitations, posters, costumes, and room interiors, as well as for performances by various Bauhaus groups.⁷⁹ One of the most famous of these was the "Beard, Nose, and Heart Party," organized by the Bauhaus band and held in Berlin on March 31, 1928—coincidentally, Gropius's last day as director—with invitations designed by Herbert Bayer. As a fund-raiser for the Bauhaus with an entrance fee of 10 marks (half price for art students), the event featured performances by the Bauhaus theater group.

A photograph by Umbo is thought to depict two revelers at this Bauhaus party: two identical clowns wearing jackets and ties and sporting dark painted mustaches and metallic beards, eyebrows, noses, and thick, curly hair (Fig. 23). While one stares intently at the viewer, the other, identical save for the addition of a pair of spectacles, appears in profile, gazing with equal seriousness to the left; together they present the front and side views of the same party specimen. The funnels perched upside down on their heads seem to bear a functional relation to the long tubes, held in their mouths like straws, that cross each other before disappearing over what appears to be the figures' shared shoulder—possibly to reappear at the tops of their funnels. Their heads held close, their bodies appear to merge, while the tubes and funnels share a delightful mechanical uselessness. Despite an absence of background detail, one senses the event's overlapping sounds, swirling movements, and multitude of other guests; emerging from the darkness with the blurred clarity of an alcoholic gaze, the two revelers embody a deadpan glee. Bodily interference—the clown tripping over his feet, the prankster falling from his chair—infused Bauhaus parties, accompanied by musical bands, dancing, recitations, and general merriment.⁸⁰ Under their funnels, the two revelers seem prime candidates for the happy irritation produced by their own bodies; nothing would appear to please them more than the prospect of tripping over their own feet.

Except, perhaps, for the possibility of tripping over each other's feet—and, the photograph suggests, these two revelers might not even register the difference. Identically dressed and decorated, they are mimetically twinned like mirror images in a carnival funhouse, their doubled presence destroying any sense of individuality. Encrustations of face paint render their faces as masks, devoid of the outward manifestations of human personality. With identical poise, they mirror each other on either side of the photograph; the crossed tubes emanating from their mouths mark a hinge between them. While the figure on the left stares directly at the camera, and at the viewer, his twin presents a more ambiguous gaze. If he is staring into the distance, then the two look

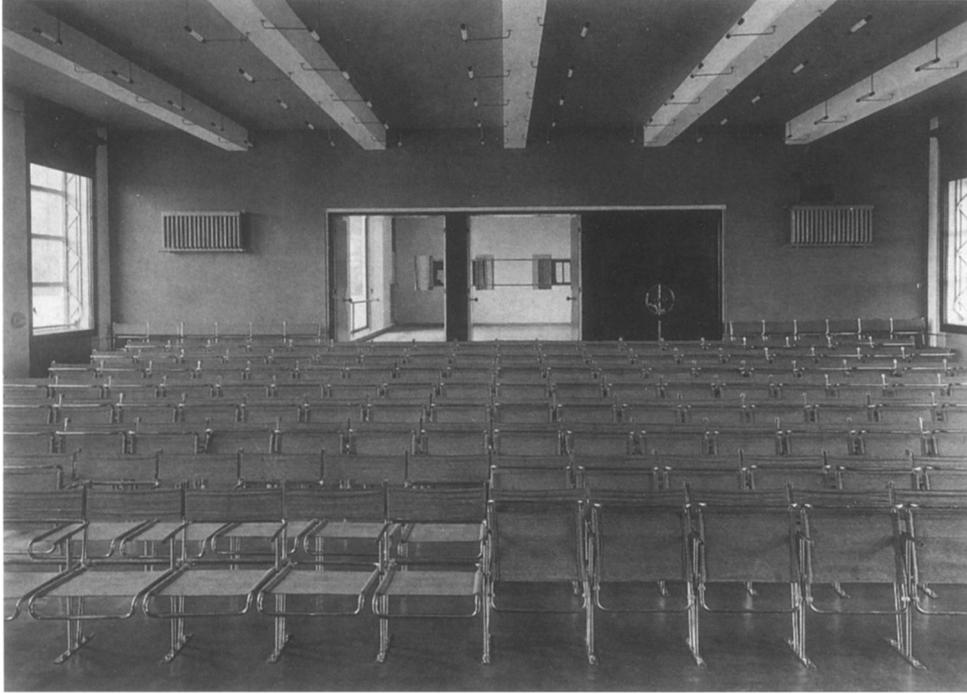


23 Umbo, Two revelers at the Beard, Nose, and Heart Party, Berlin, 1928. Los Angeles, Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, acc. no. 850514

past each other, peering at cross-purposes: a face and profile exemplifying serious silliness. If, however, he stares at his partner, then the viewer is incorporated into a triangular *mise en abîme* of clown vision, a construction of gazes interrupted only by the viewer's doubling back to return the gaze of the figure on the left. The viewer—perhaps on the verge of sensing an inverted funnel atop his or her own head—might well suppose that the crowd of party goers outside the frame contains more copies from the same mold: an assembly line of identical clowns in formal attire, purposefully sipping from useless straws. Here as elsewhere, theatrical exuberance at the Bauhaus is undermined by uncanny repetition.

Although probably taken in 1928, the photograph might instead depict the notorious "Metallic Party" held in Dessau early the following year. Originally entitled the "Church Bells, Doorbells, and Other Bells Party," this event was renamed, it is said, in an effort to keep the noise level down. Guests came attired in metallic objects of all kinds, from tinfoil to frying pans. They entered the party by sliding down a large chute that deposited them in the first of several rooms decorated for the occasion. An anonymous report printed in a local newspaper several days later described the event's delightful confusion. "And then there was music in the air everywhere," it read,

and everything was glitter wherever one turned. The rooms and studios of two floors, which normally are used



24 Consemüller, Bauhaus auditorium, Dessau, 1928. Nachlass Erich Consemüller, Cologne, private collection (from Herzogenrath and Kraus, *Erich Consemüller*, pl. 28)

for serious work, had been decorated with the greatest variety of forms placed together all over the walls, shiny metallic and fairy-like, the ceilings hung with bizarre paper configurations. . . . In addition music, bells, tinkling cymbals everywhere, in every room, in the stairways, wherever one went. . . .⁸¹

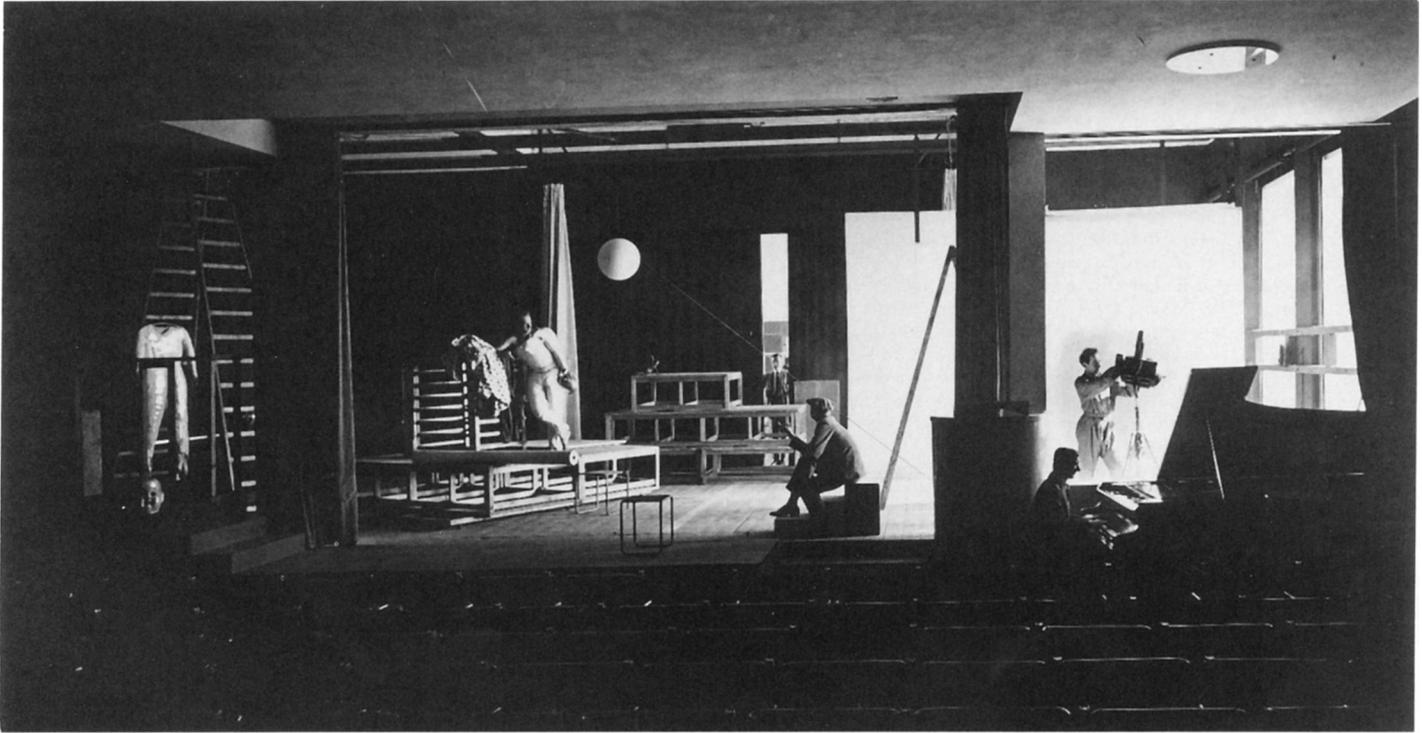
With breathless syntax, the text reproduces the sense of exhilaration fostered by the party's carnival atmosphere, as musical bands played in competition with one another while other musical sounds, less easily categorized, wafted through the Bauhaus air. The Metallic Party also featured more traditional performances in the building's auditorium, where, the newspaper reported, "a gay farrago of film pictures alternated with various stage presentations."⁸²

Such theatricality manifested itself both in formal performances and in the guise of general exuberance. "One does not want simply to see the play on the stage, but to perform the play oneself," Karl Friedrich Schinkel—perhaps Germany's most famous theater architect—had declared in 1810.⁸³ Reciprocity between spectator and performance, a trope of theater discourse increasingly prevalent after 1900, was explored explicitly at the Bauhaus. Bemoaning the structural and symbolic "isolation of the stage," for example, Moholy-Nagy stated that

in today's theater, STAGE AND SPECTATOR are separated too much from each other, divided too much into active and passive, for creative relationships and tensions to be produced between them. An activity must be developed that does not let the masses watch silently, that does not simply excite them inwardly, but that instead lets them take hold of, participate in, and—at the highest level of a redemptive ecstasy—merge with the action on stage.⁸⁴

The aesthetic response was not meant to occur too far beyond the limits of spectators' bodies; rather, performances would inspire a seated audience to a cathartic communal surge of emotion, an active but relatively contained experience. These efforts would be especially encouraged by the designs for three Bauhaus theaters: Farkas Molnár's U-Theater, seating 1,590; the Spherical Theater of Andreas Weisinger; and Gropius's Total Theater of 1926, a 2,000-seat amphitheater intended for the productions of Erwin Piscator.⁸⁵ This last structure was to contain neither private boxes nor other architectural subdivisions, such as aisles, to divide the audience hierarchically.

Within the Dessau auditorium, 164 steel-frame tubular chairs designed by Breuer, with folding canvas seats, formed a unified block of spectators: eight identical rows of 19 chairs preceded a back row comprising 12 chairs that flanked the room's wide entryway. Designed to present both lectures and more elaborate stage performances and raked very gently to improve sight lines, the room expressed the *sachlich* ideals of practicality and functionalism.⁸⁶ A photograph taken by Consemüller in 1928 of the block of seats prompts an image of a block of identical spectators (Fig. 24). As in Gropius's Total Theater, designed the same year, the unity of the audience is emphasized. No spatial or architectural elements subdivide the spectators, whose unity as a group—and reciprocal relationship with the posthumanist performers—is thereby encouraged.⁸⁷ Another photograph by Consemüller, taken one year earlier from the back of this auditorium, shows a rehearsal in progress onstage (Fig. 25). At the center, Schlemmer perches in profile on a set of three steps. With his right hand, he gestures at the dancer Siedhöff, who stands on a wooden platform at left in a Schlemmer doll outfit, mask in hand, and leans against another structure. The relationship of the audience to the stage is thus reproduced within the



25 Consemüller, photograph of Werner Siedhoff, Oskar Schlemmer, and Andreas Weininger on the Dessau Bauhaus stage, 1927. Nachlass Erich Consemüller, Cologne, private collection (from Herzogenrath and Kraus, *Erich Consemüller*, pl. 118)

photograph, as Schlemmer observes Siedhoff's performance and the two Breuer stools between them evoke the more comfortable seats in the auditorium. Revealed in the wings on the right, Andreas Weininger, clothed in worker's coveralls, directs a movie camera out the window, toward the building's terrace. An unidentified man plays the grand piano in the auditorium at right, while another stands at the center, watching the scene from the canteen behind the stage, its floor level with the stage. Another figure lurks at the left, its body a padded Schlemmer costume hung from a giant ladder, its head resting on the steps below. Hardly a spontaneous rehearsal image, the photograph presents the Bauhaus theater as *Gesamtkunstwerk*: music, dance, film, stage direction, spectatorship, and a decapitated Bauhaus doll gather together onstage, poised equally for the camera.

Creatures simultaneously without affect and fully invested with personality performed on a range of Bauhaus stages, occupied its auditoriums, celebrated at its costume parties, and clambered over its architecture to be captured by its cameras. Seven decades earlier, Wagner had imagined the following ideal scene at the theater:

The spectator completely transports himself on to the stage by looking and hearing; the performer becomes an artist only by complete absorption into the audience; the audience, that representative of public life, disappears from the auditorium. . . . It lives and breathes now only in the work of art, which seems to it life itself, and on the stage, which seems to be the whole world.⁸⁸

In the 1920s, the Bauhaus theater aimed at something similar. Complete identification would transpire between performers and spectators; the auditorium walls would fall away

to reveal the entire world as the ultimate Bauhaus stage. But such developments ultimately depended on the receptivity of its audience, in Schlemmer's eyes: "It begins with building the new house of the stage out of glass, metal and tomorrow's inventions," he maintained in 1925. "But it also begins with the spectator's inner transformation."⁸⁹ Recognizing themselves in the Bauhaus dolls, Weimar spectators experienced a communal heart pause worthy of Rilke as all of nature lifted them, like lifeless things, across the abyss of modernity itself.

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Notes

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1. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Auguste Rodin* (Leipzig: Insel, [1919]), 78.
2. Walter Gropius, introduction to Schlemmer et al., 1961, 7.
3. Walter Gropius, "Program for the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar" (April 1919), in Wingler, 31. By contrast, Gropius called for instruction in a range of other subjects that he considered necessary for a complete education in the arts. These included anatomy, garden design, contract negotiation, book-keeping, and art history—this last, he enjoined, "not presented in the sense of a history of styles, but rather to further active understanding of historical working methods and techniques" (32). The "Statutes of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar" published in January 1921, which includes a section on the curriculum, likewise makes no mention of theater. See Wingler, 44–48.
4. Schlemmer had been hired in 1922 as master of form in charge of woodworking and stone sculpture but was already overseeing theater work when Schreyer quit in early 1923, during rehearsals for performances that summer during Bauhaus week. See Wingler, 360; as well as Karl Toepfer, *Empire of Ecstasy: Nudity and Movement in German Body Culture 1910–1935* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 136–38.
5. Schlemmer et al., 1925. Copies of the book itself are dated 1924, when it was put together in Weimar; secondary literature on the Bauhaus generally gives a publication date of 1925, when the book was edited in Dessau. The book contains essays by Farkas Molnár, László Moholy-Nagy, and Schlemmer himself, with additional images by Marcel Breuer, Kurt Schmidt, and Alexander (Xanti) Schawinsky. It gained an introduction by Gropius when it was published in 1961 in English translation as *The Theater of the Bauhaus* (Schlemmer et al., 1961).
6. Schlemmer, 7.
7. On the contemporaneous relation of theater and sports (and boxing in particular), see Bertolt Brecht, "More Good Sports" (1926), in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 536–38; and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *In 1926: Living at the Edge of Time* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 42–52.
8. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (Dresden: Im Verlag der Waltherischen Handlung, 1756), 21: "Das allgemeine vorzügliche Kennzeichen der griechischen Meisterstücke ist endlich eine edle Einfalt, und eine stille Grösse, so wohl in der Stellung als im Ausdrucke."
9. Schlemmer, 18–19: "Die Kunstfigur erlaubt jegliche Bewegung, jegliche Lage in beliebiger Zeitdauer, sie erlaubt—ein bildkünstlerisches Mittel aus Zeiten bester Kunst—die verschiedenartigen Grössenverhältnisse der Figuren: Bedeutende gross, Unbedeutende klein."
10. Schlemmer, in Hüneke, 230–31, emphasis in the original: "Immer, wenn es sich um Gestaltung handelt, um freie Komposition, deren erstes Ziel nicht die Naturannäherung sein kann; wenn es sich kurzerhand im *Stil* handelt, so tritt der Typus der Figur in den Bereich des Puppenhaften." He continued, "In all early cultures that were also high cultures—the Egyptians, the early Greeks, early Indian art—the human form is far from the naturalistic image, but thus closer to the lapidary symbolic form: the *idol*, the *totem*, the *doll*. . . [In allen frühen Kulturen, die zugleich hohe waren: bei den Ägyptern, den frühen Griechen, der frühen indischen Kunst ist die menschliche Gestalt fern dem naturalistischen Abbild, aber um so näher der lapidaren Symbolgestalt: dem Idol, dem Götzen, der Puppe. . .]. The modernist emphasis on theatricality, Reiner Nägele has argued, "radicalizes exteriority to the point where the living actors are replaced by the puppet," a creature that "radically refuses dialogue," its silence enforced by the impossibility of discerning the creature's source of speech. Nägele, *Theater, Theory, Speculation: Walter Benjamin and the Scenes of Modernity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 27.
11. See, for example, Brigid Doherty, "'See: We Are All Neurasthenics!' or, the Trauma of Dada Montage," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (autumn 1997): 82–132; idem, "Figures of the Pseudorevolution," *October* 84 (spring 1998): 65–89; Mia Fineman, "Ecce Homo Prostheticus," *New German Critique* 76 (winter 1999): 85–114; Maud Lavin, *Cut with a Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); and Matthew Teitelbaum, ed., *Montage and Modern Life: 1919–1942*, exh. cat., Institute for Contemporary Art, Boston, 1992 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992). Matthew Biro discusses Raoul Hausmann's photomontages of 1920 through the insistent anachronism of the "Weimar cyborg" in "The New Man as Cyborg: Figures of Technology in Weimar Visual Culture," *New German Critique* 62 (spring–summer 1994): 71–110. On the contemporaneous technophilic creations of Wyndham Lewis and F. T. Marinetti, see Hal Foster, "Prosthetic Gods," *Modernism / Modernity* 4, no. 2 (1997): 5–38.

12. "For much of the first half of this [the twentieth] century," Christopher Phillips has written, "montage served not only as an innovative artistic technique but functioned, too, as a kind of symbolic form, providing a shared visual idiom that more than any other expressed the tumultuous arrival of a fully urbanized, industrialized culture." Phillips, introduction to Teitelbaum (as in n. 11), 22. An anonymous text in the Soviet journal *Lef*, probably by Gustav Klutis, advocates the technique for its effectiveness: "A combination of snapshots takes the place of the composition in a graphic depiction. . . . [The] precision and documentary character of the snapshot have an impact on the viewer that a graphic depiction can never attain." [Klutis], "Photomontage," *Lef*, no. 4 (1924): 43–44, trans. John E. Bowlt, quoted in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), 211–12; see also Sergei Tretyakov, "From the Editor," *Novyi Lef* 11 (1928): 41–42, in Phillips, 270–72; as well as Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1979), trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), passim.
13. For an extended analysis of this image, see Lavin (as in n. 11), 193–94.
14. On this "return to order," see Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Figures of Authority, Ciphers of Regression: Notes on the Return of Representation in European Painting," in *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (Boston: Godine, 1984), 106–35.
15. "Results of the Investigation Concerning the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar," in Wingler, 42.
16. Under the directorship of Hannes Meyer (1928–30), the Bauhaus in fact encouraged leftist politics, inspiring an engagement with collective production as much as with communism.
17. See, for example, Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus: Zwischen Anbiederung und Verfolgung* (Munich: Prestel, 1993), esp. Magdalena Droste, "Bauhaus-Maler im Nationalsozialismus: Anpassung, Selbstentfremdung, Verweigerung," 113–41.
18. Schlemmer to Gunta Stözl, June 16, 1933, quoted in Nerdinger, "Modernisierung, Bauhaus, Nationalsozialismus," in Nerdinger (as in n. 17), 19: "Ich fühle mich rein und meine Kunst streng den nat. soz. Grundsätzen entsprechend, nämlich 'heroisch, stählern-romantisch, un sentimental, hart, scharf, klar, typenschaffend' usw." "Schlemmer, who in 1934 submitted to a competition for a mosaic in the Deutsches Museum a design depicting a group marching and giving the Hitler salute to a luminous image of the Führer, wrestled for years with his position toward and within National Socialism, as his diaries (in the Bauhaus Archiv) attest." Ibid., 23 n. 52. Wingler, 257, told a different story in 1969: "Following his dismissal from the teaching profession, which had been decreed by the National Socialists [in 1933], he was forced to take odd jobs in order to manage."
19. Following World War II, such diametrically opposed arguments were indeed made in East and West Germany about the Bauhaus. See Nerdinger (as in n. 18), 17–18. For a critique of retrospective allegations of protofascism, see Koss, "Allegorical Procedures, Apocalyptic Threats: Early Weimar Cultural Positions," in *Issues of Performance in Politics and the Arts* (Berkeley: Berkeley Academic Press, 1997), 101–15. Relevant here is Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and the Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
20. Kracauer, "Those Who Wait" (1922), trans. Levin, 138, emphasis in the original.
21. Franz Roh, *Nachexpressionismus, Magischer Realismus: Probleme der Neuesten Europäischen Malerei* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt und Biermann, 1925), 45–46: "Diese blossen Fotoklebebilder haben einen eigenen Sinn. Nichts kann so deutlich die völlige Durchdringung der beiden grossen Wesenheiten neuester Kunst zeigen: äusserste Phantastik bei äusserster Nüchternheit, freiestes Komponieren bei Wirklichkeitsabklatsch, kubistische Schachtelung bei barem Abbild."
22. Heinrich von Kleist, "On the Marionette Theater" (1810), trans. Roman Paska, in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, ed. Michael Feher, pt. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books, 1989), 420. His essay inspired the theater impresario Edward Gordon Craig, whose own "The Actor and the Über-Marionette" appeared in 1908. Notably, Sigmund Freud wrote several pages about the Sandman tale by Hoffmann, whom he termed "the unrivalled master of the uncanny in literature." Freud, "The Uncanny" (1919), in *Writings on Art and Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 209 and passim.
23. Walter Benjamin, "Convolute Z," in *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 694. See also idem, "Lob der Puppe," *Literarische Welt* (Jan. 10, 1930), reprinted in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 3, ed. Hell Tiedemann-Bartels (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), 213–18; as well as idem, "Old Toys: The Toy Exhibition at the Märkisches Museum," 98–102, "The Cultural History of Toys," 113–16, and "Toys and Play: Marginal Notes on a Monumental Work," 117–21, all in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2, 1927–1934, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999). For an overview and bibliography of writings on dolls, see John Bell, "Puppets, Masks, and Performing Objects at the End of the Century," *Drama Review* 43, no. 3 (fall 1999): 15–27. An excellent compendium of essays on and images of 20th-century dolls is Pia Müller-Tamm and Katharina Sykora, eds., *Puppen Körper Automaten: Phantasmen der Moderne*, exh. cat., Düsseldorf Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1999 (Cologne: Oktagon, 1999); see esp. Horst Bredekamp, "Überlegungen

zur Unausweichlichkeit der Automaten," 94–105, and Karoline Hille, "... über den Grenzen, mitten in Nüchternheit": Prothesenkörper, Maschinenherzen, Automatenhirne," 140–59. The literature on Surrealist doll figures (in this volume and elsewhere) is extensive; see, for example, Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993); Therese Lichtenstein, *Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001); and Sue Taylor, *Hans Bellmer: The Anatomy of Anxiety* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002).

24. Small wooden figures made in the stage workshop after designs by Eberhard Schrammen (1923–25) may be found in Dirk Scheper, *Oskar Schlemmer, "Das Triadische Ballett" und die Bauhausbühne* (Berlin: Schriftenreihe der Akademie der Künste, 1988), 92–93; photographs of three marionettes by Hilde Rantzsch appeared in *Bauhaus 1*, no. 3 (1927). Moholy-Nagy—whose photograph *Puppen* was made in 1925—also worked with dolls; "out of his theoretical laboratory experiments at the Bauhaus," Gropius (as in n. 2), 10, recalled in 1961, "Moholy later developed original stage settings for the Kroll Opera House in Berlin for the *Tales of Hoffmann* and for other operatic and theatrical performances...."

25. Felix Klee, introduction to *Paul Klee: Puppen, Plastiken, Reliefs, Masken, Theater* (Neuchâtel: Galerie Suisse de Paris, 1979), 21. My thanks to Stefan Jonsson for bringing these creatures to my attention.

26. Schlemmer, 19.

27. So, too, did cinema: Ernst Lubitsch based *Die Puppe* (1919) on Hoffmann's tales, for example; Walther Ruttmann's *Berlin, Symphonie der Grossstadt* (1927) is permeated by mannequins. James Whale's 1931 film *Frankenstein*, based on Mary Shelley's book of 1817, assigned the inventor's name to his creation, conflating creator and creation precisely as had the ballet *Coppélia*, which reassigned to the doll the name of its inventor, Coppélius, in Hoffmann's tale "The Sandman" of 1815.

28. László Moholy-Nagy, "Theater, Zirkus, Varieté," in Schlemmer et al., 1925, 50, emphasis in the original.

29. Kleist (as in n. 22), 416, emphasis in the original.

30. The most famous automata, however, often proved to be elaborate hoaxes. See, for example, Mark Sussman, "Performing the Intelligent Machine: Deception and Enchantment in the Life of the Automaton Chess Player," in *Puppets, Masks, and Performing Objects*, ed. John Bell (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001), 71–84; as well as Tom Standage, *The Turk: The Life and Times of the Famous Eighteenth-Century Chess-Playing Machine* (New York: Walker, 2002).

31. Julien Offrey de La Mettrie, *Machine Man* (1747), in *Machine Man and Other Writings*, ed. and trans. Ann Thomson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 9.

32. Jean-Claude Beaune, "The Classical Age of Automata: An Impressionistic Survey from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century," trans. Ian Patterson, in Feher (as in n. 22), 432. For a history of playful automata in the context of the *Kunstkammer*, see Horst Bredekamp, *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine*, trans. Allison Brown (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1995); see also Bruce Mazlish, *The Fourth Discontinuity: The Co-Evolution of Humans and Machines* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 31–58; and Victoria Nelson, *The Secret Life of Puppets* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 47–73.

33. Beaune (as in n. 32), 436. According to André Pieyre de Mandiargues, "The word automaton contains a contradiction, because it applies both to spontaneity of movement and to the mechanization of it. Thus we come back to the idea of ambiguity and the light it casts on the strange spell automata exercise over us." Pieyre de Mandiargues, "Les rouages de l'automate," preface to Jean Prasteau, *Les automates* (Paris: Gründ, 1968), quoted in Beaune, 475.

34. On the "disenchantment with language and the growing appeal of nonverbal expression" characteristic of European theatrical modernism, see Howard B. Segal, *Body Ascendant: Modernism and the Physical Imperative* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 32 and passim. For Segal, this tendency is epitomized in the work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, whose "Letter to Lord Chandos" captured the crisis of narrative and language in 1900 and who in 1911 wrote, "Words evoke a keener sympathy, but it is at the same time figurative, intellectualized, and generalized. Music, on the other hand, evokes a fiercer sympathy, but it is vague, longingly extravagant. But the sympathy summoned by gestures is clearly all-embracing, contemporary, gratifying." Notably, the purpose of each art form here is the evocation of sympathy. Hofmannsthal, quoted in Segal, 43.

35. For an analysis of abstraction in Schlemmer's choreography, see Toeffer (as in n. 4), 138–45; on the antipsychologist impulse, see Martin Jay, "Modernism and the Specter of Psychologism," *Modernism / Modernity* 3, no. 2 (May 1996): 93–111. Related (but not identical) to the emphasis on physical gestures is Brecht's theory of *Gestus*, or gest, first articulated in print in 1930 in "The Modern Theatre Is the Epic Theatre," reprinted in *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, ed. and trans. John Willet (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 33–42. More directly linked is the development of biomechanics by the Soviet director Vsevolod Meyerhol'd, inspired partly by German theatrical modernist abstraction.

36. Schlemmer, diary entry of Sept. 1922, in Tut Schlemmer, ed., *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, trans. Krishna Winston (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), 126.

37. Moholy-Nagy (as in n. 28), 49: "So kommt der Irrtum der Futuristen,

Expressionisten, und Dadaisten und der Fehler aller auf dieser Basis gebauten Folgerungen (z. B. NUR mechanisch Exzentrik) zum Vorschein. ... Es wurde dadurch die Vorherrschaft der nur logisch-gedanklichen Werte aufgehoben."

38. *Ibid.*, 49, emphasis in the original: "Allerdings ist er nicht mehr zentral, wie im traditionellen Theater, sondern NEBEN DEN ANDEREN GESTALTUNGSMITTELN GLEICHWERTIG zu verwenden."

39. On the concept of *Sachlichkeit*, see Stanford Anderson, introduction to Hermann Muthesius, *Style-Architecture and Building-Art* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Getty Research Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994), esp. 14–19; and Frederic J. Schwartz, "Form Follows Fetish: Adolf Behne and the Problem of *Sachlichkeit*," *Oxford Art Journal* 21, no. 2 (1998): 45–77. Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraktion und Einfühlung: Ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* (1908; reprint, Amsterdam: Verlag der Kunst, 1996) is available in a poor English translation as *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1997).

40. "Posthumanism is the conscious response, whether with applause or regret, to the dissolution of psychological autonomy and individualism brought by technological modernization. It is a mobilization of aesthetic practices to effect a shift away from the humanist concept of subjectivity and its presumptions about originality, universality, and authority." K. Michael Hays, *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: The Architecture of Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Hilberseimer* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 6. See also Brecht, "Neue Sachlichkeit," in *Schriften zum Theater*, vol. 1, 1918–33 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1963), 129–30. On *neue Sachlichkeit* and subjectivity, see Helmut Lethen, *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance in Weimar Germany* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001); and Richard W. McCormick, *Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Modernity: Film, Literature, and "New Objectivity"* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), esp. 39–58.

41. Schlemmer, 7, emphasis in the original: "Zeichen unserer Zeit ist die A b s t r a k t i o n, die einerseits wirkt als Loslösung der Teile von einem bestehenden Ganzen, um diese für sich ad absurdum zu führen oder aber zu ihrem Höchstmass zu steigern, die sich andererseits auswirkt in Verallgemeinerung und Zusammenfassung, um in grossen Umriss ein neues Ganzes zu bilden." The two other signs of the age were, according to Schlemmer, mechanization and "the new possibilities given by technology and invention [die neuen Möglichkeiten, gegeben durch Technik und Erfindung]."

42. Schlemmer, wall text written in 1930 for the Folkwang Museum, Essen, in Hüneke, 231, emphasis in the original: "Denn die *Abstraktion* der menschlichen Gestalt ... schafft das Abbild in einem höheren Sinne, sie schafft nicht das *Naturwesen Mensch*, sondern ein *Kunstwesen*; sie schafft ein *Gleichnis*, ein *Symbol* der menschlichen Gestalt."

43. See the caption for pl. 1 in Wulf Herzogenrath and Stefan Kraus, eds., *Erich Consen Müller: Fotografien Bauhaus Dessau* (Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 1989), 19. Another version of the dress, designed by Lis Beyer for Dora Fieger in 1927, is in the collection of the Stiftung Bauhaus, Dessau.

44. In this context, see Anja Baumhoff, "Die 'Moderne Frau' und ihre Stellung in der Bauhaus Avant-Garde," 83–94, and Katharina Sykora, "Die Neue Frau: Ein Alltagsmythos der Zwanziger Jahre," 9–24, both in *Die Neue Frau: Herausforderung für die Bildmedien der Zwanziger Jahre*, ed. Sykora et al. (Marburg: Jonas, 1993); as well as Katerina Rüedi Ray, "Bauhaus Hausfrau: Gender Formation in Design Education," *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 2 (Nov. 2001): 73–80.

45. Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament" (1927), trans. Levin, 76. "The hands in the factory," he noted (79), "correspond to the legs of the Tiller Girls." On Weimar chorus lines, see Kirsten Beuth, "Die Wilde Zeit der Schönen Beine: Die inszenierte Frau als Körper-Masse," in Sykora et al. (as in n. 44), 95–106; Terri Gordon, "Girls Girls Girls: Re-Membering the Body," in *Rhine Crossings: France and Germany in Love and War*, ed. Peter Schulman and Aminia Brueggemann (New York: State University of New York Press, forthcoming); and Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), esp. 228–33. If the doll is the inanimate embodiment of empathy and estrangement, its animate equivalent is the prostitute, a creature of infinite fascination in Weimar culture. Chorus lines contain liminal creatures, somewhere between hired women and stage dolls.

46. Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament," trans. Levin, 76.

47. *Ibid.*

48. See Nicole Bronowski Plett, "The Performance Photographs of Oskar Schlemmer's Bauhaus Theater Workshop, 1923–20," M.A. thesis, University of New Mexico, 1989, 20–21; as well as Gisela Barche, "The Photographic Staging of the Image—On Stage Photography at the Bauhaus," trans. Michael Robinson, in *Photography at the Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990), 238–53. The sculpted head reappears in an anonymous image reprinted in Schlemmer et al., 1961, 104.

49. Rainer Maria Rilke, "Puppen," in *Schriften*, vol. 4, ed. Horst Niewolke (Frankfurt: Insel, 1996), 689. A discussion of similar themes in Rilke's writings on Auguste Rodin is found in Alex Potts, "Dolls and Things: The Reification and Disintegration of Sculpture in Rodin and Rilke," in *Sight and Insight: Essays on Art and Culture in Honor of E. H. Gombrich at 85*, ed. John Onians (London: Phaidon, 1994), 355–78. Schlemmer's last diary entry consists entirely of a quotation from Rilke: "To consider art not as a microcosm of the world, but rather as the world's complete transformation into magnificence...." Schlemmer, diary entry of Apr. 1, 1943, quoted in Hüneke, 348.

50. Robert Vischer, preface to "On the Optical Sense of Form: A Contribution to Aesthetics" (1873), in *Empathy, Form and Space: Problems in German*

Aesthetics, 1873–1893, ed. and trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou (Santa Monica, Calif.: Getty Center Publications, 1994), 92. The introduction to this indispensable anthology provides a historical overview of the development of the concept of empathy in the 19th century, treating the work of Conrad Fiedler, August Schmarsow, Vischer, Heinrich Wölfflin, and others.

51. Gropius (as in n. 2), 8, 9–10. Acknowledging the importance of theater in the autumn of 1922, Gropius emphasized “the power of its effect on the soul of the spectator and the auditor,” an effectiveness that was, in turn, “dependent on the success of the transformation of the idea into (visually and acoustically) perceivable space.” Gropius, “The Work of the Bauhaus Stage,” in Wingler, 58.

52. Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 239 (translation modified).

53. After many years’ work with the concept, Brecht named the technique *Verfremdung* in 1936 in response to a performance he had attended in Moscow the previous year. See Brecht, “Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting,” in *Brecht* (as in n. 35), 91–99. The background historical narrative provided here extends from 1914, when the Russian Formalist writer and critic Viktor Shklovsky proclaimed *ostranenie*, or estrangement, as the defining concept of art, through the Soviet theorists in the Lef group to Brecht’s articulation in 1936 of the *Verfremdungseffekt*. See Stanley Mitchell, “From Shklovsky to Brecht: Some Preliminary Remarks towards a History of the Politicisation of Russian Formalism,” and Ben Brewster, “From Shklovsky to Brecht: A Reply,” both in *Screen* 15, no. 2 (summer 1974): 74–102; Peter Demetz, introduction to *Brecht: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 1–15; Koss, “Brecht and Russian Estrangement,” paper presented at the International Brecht Society Annual Symposium, San Diego, May 1998; and idem, “Playing Politics with Estranged and Empathetic Audiences: Bertolt Brecht and Georg Fuchs,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 96, no. 4 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1998): 809–20.

54. Worringer had used empathy as a foil for his discussion of abstraction in 1908; the concept also operated as an ambiguous foil for *Zerstreuung*, or distraction, in Kracauer’s work. See Koss, “Embodied Vision: Empathy Theory and the Modernist Spectator” and “Empathy Resurgent,” papers presented at the College Art Association annual conferences in New York in February 2000 and February 2003.

55. Bertolt Brecht, entry for July 21, 1944, in *Journals 1934–1955*, ed. John Willett, trans. Hugh Rorrison (New York: Routledge, 1996), 321.

56. Brecht, entry for Feb. 1, 1941, in *ibid.*, 131.

57. Moholy-Nagy (as in n. 28), 47: “Die Wirkung dieser Körpermechanik . . . besteht im wesentlichen darin, dass der Zuschauer über die ihm von andern vorgeführten Möglichkeiten seines eigenen Organismus erstaunt oder erschrocken ist. Es entsteht also eine subjektive Wirkung.”

58. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1928), quoted in Nägele (as in n. 10), 111.

59. Kracauer, “Cult of Distraction: On Berlin’s Picture Palaces” (1926), trans. Levin, 326. “Nobody would notice the figure at all if the crowd of spectators, who have an aesthetic relation to the ornament and do not represent anyone, were not sitting in front of it.” Kracauer, “The Mass Ornament,” in *ibid.*, 77. Notably, Paul de Man associated Kleist and Kracauer via the theme of distraction. “When, in the concluding lines of Kleist’s text [“On the Marionette Theater”], K is said to be ‘ein wenig zerstreut,’ then we are to read, on the strength of all that goes before, *zerstreut* not only as distracted but also as dispersed, scattered, and dismembered.” De Man, “Aesthetic Formalization in Kleist,” in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 289.

60. “Ever since capitalism has existed, of course, within its defined boundaries rationalization has always occurred. Yet the rationalization period from 1925 to 1928 represents a particularly important chapter, which has produced the irruption of the machine and ‘assembly-line’ methods into the clerical departments of big firms.” Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany*, trans. Quintin Hoare (1929; reprint, New York: Verso, 1998), 29–30.

61. Kracauer, “The Little Shopgirls Go to the Movies” (1927), trans. Levin, 76. On the relation of gender and attention among Weimar cinema audiences and the theorists who described them, see Patrice Petro, “Perceptions of Difference: Woman as Spectator and Spectacle,” in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, ed. Katherina von Ankum (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 41–66.

62. On this tendency, see Andreas Huyssen, “Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism’s Other,” in *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Post-modernism* (Bloomington, Ind.: University of Indiana Press, 1986), 44–62.

63. By 1926, Toepfer (as in n. 4), 140, writes, “the dance was famous enough to spawn a gallery exhibit in Central European cities. As the piece grew older, it became shorter; once an evening-long event, it wound up featured on a program of modernist works. Finally, in 1932 the piece went to Paris as part of an international dance competition promoting the restoration of elite, high cultural glory to ballet.” For more on the history and significance of the *Triadic Ballet*, see Karin von Maur, *Oskar Schlemmer*, exh. cat., Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, 1977, 197–212; Scheper (as in n. 24); Nancy Troy, “An Art of Reconciliation: Oskar Schlemmer’s Work for the Theater,” 127–47, and Debra McCall, “Reconstructing Schlemmer’s Bauhaus Dances: A Personal

Narrative,” 149–59, both in *Oskar Schlemmer*, ed. Arnold L. Lehman and Brenda Richardson, exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art, 1986; and, finally, *Oskar Schlemmer—Tanz—Theater—Bühne*, exh. cat., Kunsthalle, Vienna, 1997.

64. “The surprising success of the debut of the Bauhaus theater in Berlin,” he proudly noted in May 1929, “created the pleasant circumstance that theoretical defences and speculations are justified by the facts of practice and may be detached from these [Das überraschende Erfolg des Debüts der Bauhaus-bühne in Berlin . . . schuf die angenehme Lage, dass die theoretischen Verteidigungen und Spekulationen durch die Tatsache der Praxis gerechtfertigt und von diesen abgelöst werden].” Schlemmer, diary entry, in Hüneke, 209–10. “Why is the public so enthusiastic? From primitivism, opposition, the emotion of contemporary culture? From a misunderstanding of the humor, from a desire for Variety shows? So asks the well-known expert dance scholar Professor Oskar Bie. . . [‘Warum ist das Publikum so begeistert? Aus Primitivität, aus Opposition, aus Gefühl der Zeitkultur? Aus Missverstehen der Komik, aus Varietätelust?’, so fragt der bekannte, erfahrene Tanzwissenschaftler Professor Oskar Bie. . . .]” *Ibid.*, 209.

65. Schlemmer, “The Mathematics of the Dance,” *Vivos Voco* 5, nos. 8–9 (Aug.–Sept. 1926), trans. Wingler, 119.

66. *Ibid.*

67. Foreshadowing the exuberance of this final figure, the two men in the second-act finale (“Turkish dancers”) brandish batons beyond their own rectangular frames; the hand of one man is also cut off by the column’s left edge.

68. Freud (as in n. 22), 195. See also Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), esp. 3–14, 21–26. On the link between *Unheimlichkeit*, Martin Heidegger, and the Bauhaus, see Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, trans. Michael Eldred (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 203–4.

69. Kracauer, “The Mass Ornament,” trans. Levin, 78. While the prevalence of isolated body parts in Weimar cultural representation is often attributed to the German experience of World War I, the presence of severed limbs across a spectrum of works both before and after the war demands a larger treatment of the relations between cultural production, industrial society, and the evolving discussion of modern subjectivity. Such a project would accommodate Kracauer’s association of the limbs of alienated labor with those performing cultural estrangement (“the hands in the factory correspond to the legs of the Tiller Girls”; *ibid.*, 79); it would also engage further the thematic of gender among the androgynous Weimar dolls.

70. The two paragraphs of text read as follows: “Triadisch, abgeleitet von Triad = Dreizahl, Dreiklang. Es sind 3 Tänzer (eine Tänzerin und zwei Tänzer, die einzeln, zu zweien, oder zu dreien tanzen); drei Hauptfarben der Bühne: citrongelbe, weiss und schwarz; es sind zusammen 12 Tänze in zusammen 18 Kostümen. Das Ballett entstand z.T. schon vor 1914. Teile davon wurden 1916 aufgeführt. Erstaufführung des ganzen Balletts 1922 in Landestheater in Stuttgart. Darauf in Weimar und Dresden. Später (mit Musik zu einer mechanischen Orgel von Paul Hindemith) in Donaueschingen und in einer Revue in Berlin” (“Triadic,” derived from Triad, in the mathematical and musical senses. There are three dancers [one female and two male, who dance individually, in pairs, or all three together]; three main colors on the stage: lemon yellow, white, and black; there are 12 dances and 18 costumes altogether. The ballet had already begun prior to 1914. Parts of it were performed in 1916. Premiere of full ballet in 1922 in the Landestheater in Stuttgart. Repeated in Weimar and Dresden. Later [with music for mechanical organ by Paul Hindemith] in Donaueschingen and in a revue in Berlin).

71. Schlemmer, diary entry of Sept. 1922, in Hüneke, 96.

72. Gropius (as in n. 3), 31.

73. Richard Wagner, *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (Leipzig: Otto Wiegand, 1850), 186–87, emphasis in the original. On the Wagner cult in late-19th- and early-20th-century Germany, see Uta Grund, *Zwischen den Künsten: Edward Gordon Craig und das Bildtheater um 1900* (Berlin: Akademie, 2002), esp. 152ff.

74. That Gropius and others embraced this cultural lineage with renewed zeal in early 1919 is also unremarkable; Wagner’s cultural politics, developed in the context of the 1848 revolution, would have appealed strongly to those of Nietzschean bent during the revolutionary early Weimar era, when socialist leanings were easily expressed as a demand for cultural unity achieved by means of revolutionary creativity.

75. Gropius (as in n. 3), 31. The notion of the theater of the future and that of theater as the highest cultural symbol had recently been formulated in Germany by Peter Behrens in *Feste des Lebens und der Kunst: Eine Betrachtung des Theaters als Höchsten Kultursymbols* (Darmstadt: C. F. Winter’shen, 1900); and by Georg Fuchs in *Die Schaubühne der Zukunft* (Leipzig: Georg Müller, 1905).

76. Count Harry Kessler, quoted in Steven Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 23. “For the post-1890 literate public, some sort of confrontation with Nietzsche—the man, the image, and his works—was becoming virtually obligatory.” Aschheim, Gropius (as in n. 3), 32, 18.

77. Schlemmer even created his own Nietzschean aphorisms. “The world belongs to the dancer, as Nietzsche would say,” Schlemmer wrote in a letter to Otto Meyer-Amden, Dec. 28, 1919, in Hüneke, 58. Hüneke, 374 n. 34, wryly notes: “Unfortunately I have not yet been able to verify such a statement.”

78. Felix Klee, “The Urge for Renewal and Parties at the Bauhaus,” in *Bauhaus*, ed. Jeannine Fiedler and Peter Feierabend, trans. Translate-a-Book, Oxford (Cologne: Könemann, 1999), 172.

79. The spontaneous festivities of the Weimar years became more organized in Dessau; gaining infamy as financial burdens increased, they operated as fund-raisers in the school's final year, in Berlin. See Ute Ackermann, "Bauhaus Parties—Histrionics between Eccentric Dancing and Animal Drama," in Fiedler and Feierabend (as in n. 78), 126–39.

80. Nägele (as in n. 10), 3, has described the foregrounding of the body in the performances of the 1920s; citing "Brecht's gestural and epic theater, the theater of cruelty and the absurd, a theater where a clown appears and stumbles ostentatiously," he states that after the "increasing interiorization" that characterized bourgeois drama, "the body becomes visible as an obstacle; it speaks through irritation." Likewise relevant is the growing popularity of cabaret performance and theatrical revues in the 1920s; see Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting, and Performance, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 139–84.

81. "Something Metallic," *Anhalter Anzeiger* (Dessau), Feb. 12, 1929, trans. Wingler, 157.

82. Ibid. A related discussion of the contemporaneous productions of Erwin Piscator, beyond the scope of the present essay, might explore the shared effort to render the spectator a participant by combining such elements as film and slide projections into a larger theatrical event. Bauhaus performances avoided Piscator's political orientation (and Brecht's attempt to "refunction" spectators politically). Schlemmer called Piscator "very politically tendentious, but strong in this approach. Doesn't understand our thing—for him it's just play. Nevertheless he intends—said this in passing—eventually to collaborate on creating a theater school in Berlin, but very politically leftist." Schlemmer to Tut Schlemmer, Apr. 11, 1927, in Hüneke, 170. John Willett has described Piscator, whose Berlin home was outfitted by the Bauhaus furniture workshop, as "providing the Bauhaus with its main link

to the Berlin stage"; in addition to the Total Theater, he also commissioned theater settings from Moholy-Nagy in 1928. Willett, introduction to *Erwin Piscator, 1893–1966* (Berlin: Archiv der Akademie der Künste, 1979), 1.

83. Karl Friedrich Schinkel to Carl Friedrich Zelter, Oct. 22, 1821, quoted in Jochen Meyer, *Theaterbautheorien zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft: Die Diskussion über Theaterbau im deutschsprachigen Raum im der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1998), 191.

84. Moholy-Nagy (as in n. 28), 54.

85. Molnár presented his U-Theater in *Die Bühne am Bauhaus* (Schlemmer et al., 1925, 57–62); Schlemmer included Weininger's Spherical Theater in his lecture "Bühne," reprinted in the same volume (see n. 86 below); and Gropius inserted a discussion and several illustrations of his Total Theater in the introduction to the book's English-language edition in 1961 (Schlemmer et al., 1961), 10–14. On the link between Gropius's theater design and Italian fascism, see Jeffrey T. Schnapp, "Border Crossings: Italian/German Peregrinations of the *Theater of Totality*," *Critical Inquiry* 21 (1994): 80–123.

86. See Schlemmer, "Bühne," a lecture presented on Mar. 16, 1927, and published in *Bauhaus* 1, no. 3 (July 10, 1927); an English translation appears in Schlemmer et al., 1961, 81–101. For further description of the auditorium, see Scheper (as in n. 24), 137–38.

87. On the link between the birth of abstraction, auditorium design, the unified audience, and cinema spectatorship, see Koss, "Empathy and Abstraction in Munich," in *The Built Surface*, vol. 2, *Architecture and the Pictorial Arts from Romanticism to the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Karen Koehler (London: Ashgate Press, 2002), 98–119.

88. Wagner (as in n. 73), 188–89.

89. Schlemmer, 20.