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FASHION: CHATTERS  BUCHAU/ THE BUCHAU
CONSTRUCTING A NON-STYLE
Robert Elms sketches an outline of the movement from which Bauhaus took their name.
Between 1919 and 1933, the Bauhaus created the most complete, most committed, and most inspiring statement of radical style (or anti-style) this century. They were so far ahead and so extreme that no one else has yet come close to approaching their influence on the shape and style of our age.
What was the Bauhaus? It was a school.
"Together let us desire, conceive and create the new structure of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity and which will one day rise toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith."
The opening programme for the new school of art and design instituted at Weimar, Germany, in April 1919, was drafted by architect and visionary Walter Gropius, the founder and guiding light of an institution that by placing its emphasis on 'der Bau (construction) as the central focus for a revolution in the arts and environment, totally redefined both modern art and modern architecture.
One of its main aims was "the retreat from medievalism", the desire to wrench art into the twentieth century under the slogan, "Art And Technology — A New Unity."
Students trained in workshops and art laboratories as artists and craftsmen as to create, the completely functional (thus anti-stylistic) modern living environment employing the latest materials and technology of the new age to create the total design for living in that age.
Yet the Bauhaus was no mere home for academic theories, but an exciting, whirlwind centre for all things modern, new and vibrant. The staid atmosphere was set by the very nature of the school. Teachers were equal in status and the Bauhaus jazz band played the widest of new sounds, photography, printing — even fashion design were all part of the avant-garde atmosphere of the school which became a way of life.
The students and even the teachers became known for eccentricity of dress and eccentricity to the point of derision by the discerning reader.

BAUHAUS — ADDITIONAL READING
In which three-quarters of Bauhaus make a daring conclusion to the commercial press, and expose the issues closest to their hearts to the discerning reader.
Favorite Snark
DAVID: Rain
DANNY: Trees
KEVIN: Pipe tobacco (tobacco)
Favorite Fetch
DAVID: This bag is not a toy
DANNY: 1200cc
KEVIN: Whipping the dogs
Favorite Sound (non-musical)
DAVID: Beach boys
DANNY: The sea
KEVIN: Waves breaking through the head
Favorite Color Scheme
DAVID: Black/White
DANNY: Blue/Black
KEVIN: Fluorescent Pink/Green/Orange

Favorite Film
DAVID: Enzo Ferrari, The Innocents, The Fly
DANNY: Rocky Horror Picture Show
KEVIN: Casablanca
Dislikes
DAVID: Fragrant flowers, snowmen, positive time
DANNY: —
KEVIN: Music business, guns, T-Birds, smoking
Likes
DAVID: Mysteries, checked shirts, nervousness
DANNY: —
KEVIN: Beaches at night and making a cup of tea
Favorite Record
DAVID: Minnie the Moosher/Kicking the Gong Around — Roy Fox Orchestra
DANNY: Black Leather — Nightmare in White
KEVIN: Sitting on the Dock of the Bay — Otis Redding
Favorite Comic
DAVID: 2000 AD (Tharg)
DANNY: Green with lots of pictures
KEVIN: Egypt comics
Favorite Ice Cream Flavour
DAVID: Mocha Plee
DANNY: Lime
KEVIN: Banana
Favorite Item of Clothing
DAVID: Mickey Mouse Gas Mask
DANNY: Black t-shirts
KEVIN: Surfboards for roses
Favorite Season
DAVID: Autumn
DANNY: Summer and Winter
KEVIN: Watermelon Sunset in Summer
Favorite Phobia
DAVID: Waking up with a beard of bees
DANNY: Work
KEVIN: Enthusiasms and earwigs
Favorite Bauhaus Record
DAVID: Bella Lugosi's Dead, Music
DANNY: Bella Lugosi's Dead
KEVIN: Bella Lugosi's Dead, Double Dare
Take it or leave it, but no compromise. Bauhaus make no concessions to fashion, musical trends, audience, press — perhaps not even to each other.

Daniel Ash, David Jay, Kevin Haskins and Peter Murphy (who wasn't there to defend himself) all maintain different angles on their music, a practice illustrated in their forthcoming 'Consequences' video, in which each member of the band contributes a separate section to make up the whole.

"The same process was used on the B side of 'The Passion Of Lovers'. We didn't refer to any point, but it's interesting to see if there are any natural or unconscious links."

This diversity of ideas tends to make their collective music stronger and unpredictable; there is no "typical" sound, from two pieces unaccompanied — I decided to superimpose the sounds, resulting in the double tracking of all the instruments on the record. The melody and counter-melody on 'Nothing' is played on a pocket calculator, recorded at a higher level."

"Rene, now an ex-Bauhaus fan, is an artist living in Cornwall with his own retrospective exhibition currently running in Bristol.

"Any other connections with the original movement are natural rather than studied," says David. But they do seem to exist — especially in the theatrical/visual elements. There is a stage similarity, a confrontation between performer and spectator, presented by stark lighting contrasts, Peter's dynamic use of space and the band's synchronisation.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus are left to right:
Kevin Haskins (drums),
David Jay (bass),
Peter Murphy (vocals) and
Dane Ash (guitar).

their classic debut single, 'Bella Lugosi's Dead', right through to 'Mask', the new album.

"The whole band is very spontaneous," says Daniel, "there's no preconceived strategy or specific influence as far as the creation of our music is concerned — in fact there's a lack of it."

"Obviously there are certain issues we work towards," adds David, "but we try to ignore our conflict in ideas.

Bauhaus do not associate their motives with those of the original Weimar movement. In fact, some aspects of their music (for example the Gothic/romantic element) are directly contradictory to that school of thought.

"At first we called the band Bauhaus 1919. The implications seemed right at the time, but even then they were very tenuous; the only real link being that we wanted to strip everything down and just include the most essential components: straight, functional and stark, although we are a bit more elaborate now."

David retains an interest in the Bauhaus approach, which he is separately pursuing in a one-off single: 'Nothing/I Am A Machine', made with Rene Hackett, one of the original members of the Bauhaus movement. He was intrigued when he heard that there was a group going by the name of Bauhaus, and contacted us; so I visited him and had the idea of combining some of his poetry with my music.

"Originally I just wanted to use soft drums as a background, but after working with the tape — a recording of Rene reciting But live on stage, Bauhaus are in a different world: visually stunning, and they have an unteachable method of delivery — almost a barrier — which makes the impact much more powerful.

"That's how it is — we like it like that and so do the audience, but it's not a conscious barrier.

"When we play live it is an honest portrayal of how we feel — we're not posing or pretending. We don't try to be 'one of the lads', if you like, but rather do we maintain that we're superior to the audience — we're not elevated to that extent. And if that comes across it's a misconception.

"It's sincerely to yourself. A live gig isn't going to last very long, and people will see through it in the end if it's not sincere. Audiences are very perceptive to that, but the press are not."

Bauhaus are probably justified in feeling that they've been misinterpreted by the music papers, but whether this is a criticism of press understanding/honesty, or an inability on the part of the band to put themselves across in their own terms, depends on how you look at it.

Whatever way, it does not satisfy upset them if 'we used to burst into tears', says Danny, fast, as David points out: "If you are successful at what you're doing, then it's enough that you present your ideas through whatever's your chosen medium.

So why should you need the superficial press coverage?"

This is the essence. The Bauhaus stage is a relatively inaccessible one, which makes it all the more attractive.

JESSAMY CALKIN