Wisdom is not the product of schooling but the lifelong attempt to acquire it.
- Albert Einstein

Digital Bauhaus and Interesting Websites

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and
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ATLAS TAM Course, Spring 2000 — January 24
Digital Bauhaus


• **objective: a third culture** → a new meeting between the two cultures of art and science, between the “soft” and the ‘hard’ side

• **beyond the modern praise of new technologies** → critical and creative aesthetic-technical production orientation uniting modern information and communication technology with design, art, culture, and society

• **Scandinavian design** → participatory design (see EDC)
  - democratic perspective
  - open dialogue
  - active user participation

• **pedagogy at the School in Malmö:**
  - students have to take responsibility for their own learning
  - reflective practice: a dialogue between coach and student
  - design of digital media requires: teamwork and different competencies
The Bauhaus in Weimar

• **The tension around 1920:**
  Industrial revolution, assembly lines, and poverty due to World War I → crafts and productive industries only fabricated functional and effective artifacts without major demands on aesthetic appearance

  On the other end of this development many artists pursued art for its own sake. Both, arts and crafts had lost their commitment to everyday problems of society

• **consequence of these developments:** the Bauhaus in Weimar comes 1919 into existence

• **the theme of the movement:** to bridge between dualism in modern society between

  - production ↔ life
  - art ↔ technology
  - craft work ↔ industrialization (standardized mass production)
  - individuals ↔ society
  - the spiritual ↔ the material

• **Walter Gropius:** ‘...Let us therefore form a new guild of craftsmen without the socially divisive presumptuousness that would erect a wall of arrogance between craftsmen and artists...’
Parallel to Today’s Situation

• claims:
  today’s computer systems and technology based communication media do not reflect other human needs than functional and cognitive factors
  these factors only are not enough to attract people without technological background

• things that think → things that makes us smart

• Don Norman "Turning the Page on the New Millennium → http://mitpress.mit.edu/Cover/2000/01/norman.html

• the past:
  - the technology of the 20th century has been mind numbing
  - it was at the forefront, rapidly advancing, rapidly changing, and for us who were supposed to benefit, a continual pain
  - for the average citizen, most of the century seems to have been one long painful learning experience
  - stability was out, change was in
Norman: Turning the Page on the New Millennium

• the future:
  - time for technology to be quieter, calmer, and less visible
  - time to hide the technology → to let it all become invisible — just as the sewers and water pipes of the homes are invisible, yet still essential; or just as the electric wiring and electric motors throughout the home or office are ever present but beneath conscious awareness
  - let the computer technology become an enabling infrastructure: invisible, out of sight, out of mind, but ever more powerful

• novel activities:
  - geographical location will be less important, although paradoxically, geographical proximity may become even more essential
  - the workplace can transform from a place to an activity, where location no longer matters (but time zone does).
  - education can be always present, just-in-time, when and where needed, throughout life
How to Put the Bauhaus Approach into Work

• vocabulary from computer science scares often artists and human scientists off

• removal of classical barriers between experts of different disciplines and to improve mutual acceptance.

• critical examination of the use of complex communication systems and its components, resulting in suggestions and realisations to modify systems and components in respect of innovations

• use the systems we develop in our everyday work → self-application

• establish a new cross-cultural communication:
  - people with mainly technical background need to learn about arts, philosophy and the human sciences → to provide technology which serves the human
  - an attempt by artists, philosophers, and other human sciences to better understand technology → to be able to advice technicians how to build a new class of communication technology
Websites

- L3D: http://www.cs.colorado.edu/~l3d/
- MIT Media Lab: http://www.media.mit.edu/
- Stanford Learning Lab: http://learninglab.stanford.edu/index.shtml
- Malmö University’s School of Art and Communication: http://www.kk.mah.se/
# Arts and Computers — Examples of L3D Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems</th>
<th>Authors / Users</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schemepaint</td>
<td>Mike Eisenberg, Silke Haarer</td>
<td>direct manipulation and programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypergami</td>
<td>Mike and Ann Eisenberg</td>
<td>computational crafts, integration of physical and computational worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ArtPals</td>
<td>Jim Ambach, Alex Repenning, Jim Johnson</td>
<td>active tools (----&gt; ArtDwarfs; Frieder Nake et. al.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eMMa</td>
<td>Kumiyo Nakakoji</td>
<td>color critiquing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEGOsheets</td>
<td>Andri Ioannidou and Alexander Repenning</td>
<td>active, self-directed learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envisionment and Discovery Collaboratory</td>
<td>Ernie Arias, Gerhard Fischer, Hal Eden, Eric Scharff, Andy Gorman</td>
<td>integration of physical and computational worlds, open systems, contextualized information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>