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THE WOMEN OF THE BAUHAUS WEAVING WORKSHOP:

ANNI ALBERS' AND GUNTA STÖLZL'S IMPACT

BY

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SUBMITTED TO PITZER COLLEGE IN

PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF

BACHELOR OF THE ARTS

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May 4, 2020

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Acknowledgements

My thesis would not be what it is today without the instruction and support of the remarkable art history professors across the Claremont colleges. Despite having to leave campus early, thank you to Professor Hackbarth for still making time to read my work, call to check in, and generally keep me motivated and inspired to continue pushing myself throughout this entire process. I would also like to thank Professor MacNaughton for being a source of clarity and offering wonderful advice whenever I suffered from writer's block or needed to be pointed in another direction.

Thank you to my parents for allowing me to talk endlessly about this niche subject for months and encouraging me to stay positive whenever my confidence wavered. Thank you to my younger brother for being a night owl with me and ready to chat during the study breaks. Finally, thank you to my friends who looked over my drafts and the greater Pitzer community. While our time was cut short, the memories and friendships we made are unforgettable and will be cherished indefinitely.

Introduction

The Bauhaus was an experimental art school that was established by Walter Gropius in 1919 and existed until 1933. In a mere fourteen years, the Bauhaus managed to gain international notoriety that extended long past its closure. Gropius founded the school under the principles that art and craft, two similar practices with vastly different levels of recognition, were of equal value and that students' abilities and talents were more important than their gender. Due to these initial claims, more women than men applied to the institution seeking the rare opportunity to pursue their work as they saw fit. However, this optimistic promise transformed into one of the most glaring hypocrisies at the Bauhaus.

The mass number of women at the institution threatened to make the Bauhaus too experimental for its time to be taken seriously. This issue altered the course of all the female students entering the institution. While there were a few women who managed to end up participating in the practices they set out to pursue, most women were corralled into the Women's Department, which would later merge with the Weaving Workshop. This thesis focuses on two female weavers and their critical works that reveal their hands in shaping Bauhaus weaving's ever evolving role and artistic significance during and following the school's existence. Chapter one works to recognize these complications in German weaver, Gunta Stölzl's, early Bauhaus years and her first woven work in 1920. Stölzl was previously trained as a two-dimensional artist and intended to continue her training in painting and drawing upon entering the Bauhaus. However, she was quickly forced into the Women's Department where she was only allowed to choose her future medium from a limited list of female-appropriate options. She selected to continue her practice in the Weaving Workshop, which would eventually become the only option for women. This issue was deeply gendered, as no men

created in the weaving workshop and it was situated as the lowest social status of all media at the Bauhaus.

By 1920, Stölzl was firmly situated in the Weaving Workshop and went about creating her first woven work. This work was stand out from all that she had created prior and would continue to produce in the future. With the master of the Weaving Workshop at the time being a male painter who refused to even touch the woven material, preliminary course education from another painter, and her two-dimensional past, Stölzl created a handweaving that had a foot in both media. She looked to painting theory in designing the surface of the weaving, but it is also equally evident that Stölzl became aware of the materiality of her new medium. The pictorial aspects on the surface of the work point to her relationship with the two-dimensional side of her practice, but the interwoven, varied, and conscious layering within the threads of the work suggest recognition of the capabilities of her new medium. In her first handweaving, later titled “Cows in Landscape,” Stölzl created something entirely new as she untangled her relationship with her new, previously unwanted medium while remaining conscious of her two-dimensional training.

This complicated, weighted relationship with artistic mediums was relatable to most weavers that entered the Weaving Workshop. Chapter two turns its sights to Anni Albers, another notorious Bauhaus weaver and an untitled wall hanging she produced in 1925. Much like Stölzl, she adamantly refused to alter the course of her artistic practice for fear of taking on a medium with far less artistic recognition. However, once she was left with no choice, Albers’ introduction to the material was ludic in character, as she went about creating with an almost childlike passion. This state was familiar to many Bauhaus artists regardless of medium, but when it came to Albers’ work, it involved removing the projected purpose of textile and then

redefining it on her own artistic terms. Her application of purpose was based in the visual, material, and process components in creating a woven work. Visually, Albers developed an interest in anti-compositional aesthetics and tied modern design language into the surface of her work, linking weaving to art forms that were more recognized than weaving at the time. In composing her work, Albers experimented with newly created materials, not only linking her work to conversations on mass-production, but also expanding the possibilities of a weaving especially when she worked with light reflecting and sound absorbing materials. While undergoing the process of creating a weaving, she found interest in the inherent, physically restrictive quality to the medium. All of these components were interwoven with one another, as restraint was evident in the pre-planned aspects of the work, as well as in the anti-compositional design. The entire product was an art object that was enriched with conceptual allure that affectively communicated with the shifting ideals of the Bauhaus at the time, as well as the greater art world. Nearly midway through the Bauhaus years, this creator produced objects that defied all previous understandings of textile as an art form.

The final chapter closes off the Bauhaus years and delves into both of these weavers' relationships with their institution, how it affected their work produced in and out from under its roof, and how these two artists had progressed in their practices. As the Bauhaus had extremely firm ideals and literal ownership over the objects produced, there were inevitable effects on the creators' work before, during, and after their time there. Following their Bauhaus years, both women continued to work with textile but explored the material in separate contexts. Albers continued to experiment with contemporary technology in her work and created for other institutions, including colleges and museums. Her work found power in the fine-art setting and aesthetic of usefulness that could be gleaned at the Bauhaus. While it did not define her work,

Albers was able to spin these elements into aspects that fueled it. In combining the medium of weaving with contemporary physical and theoretical traits, Albers created objects that transcended external artistic and use expectations for the medium. Visually, her work continued to evolve in the anti-compositional style, as the surfaces of the weavings maintained a similar lack of preciousness.

Stölzl also continued to produce weavings, but in a workshop in Zurich. While her workshop faced hardships and she was not showing her work in exhibitions, Stölzl's practice blended the lines between work and art. This aspect to her practice began to evolve early in her career at the Bauhaus, as she became the Weaving Workshop master in her later years, but had already characterized this workshop and set up a separate one in Zurich with one of her masters in prior years. As she sold her work to customers and curated her place of production, the process and products merged. The idea of craft's involvement and blending with industry was a present and physical part of her practice. Aesthetically, she continued to explore pictorial aspects in her work, the surfaces of the weavings falling into a category between pictures and patterns. Both artists ultimately created in self-curated contexts that spoke to their Bauhaus education despite the difference of their paths.

Although the Bauhaus years were brief, Stölzl and Albers were able to reconstruct the outlines of the Weaving Workshop through the evolution of their own works during and after the school's closure. The external artistic and social limitations on the medium drove these women to explore their personal complicated relationships with the material, ultimately creating complex objects that spoke to their surroundings and surpassed what weaving was assumed to have been capable of.

Chapter One

In 1920, when the Weaving Workshop was one of the three workshops included in the Women's Department, Gunta Stölzl created "Cows in Landscape" ("Kühe in Landschaft"), a handweaving that embodies weaving's status in the early Bauhaus years, relationships between different students and mediums, and the implications of weaving's use of painting theory for inspiration (fig. 1). This handweaving represents a crucial year in the Weaving Workshop's establishment and Stölzl's development of artistic identity.

The practice of weaving underwent a complex process in determining its use, members, and place at the Bauhaus during the first four years of the school, with one of the most major alterations in 1920. While the Bauhaus, along with the Weaving Workshop, was established in 1919 and the weavers were some of the earliest practicing students at the school, the workshop's initial state was unstable. Following Walter Gropius's declaration of gender equality at the Bauhaus, the school initially attracted more female than male students due to the unique, appealing opportunity for women who were accustomed to roadblocks that hindered their presence in educational establishments and the art world. In 1919, eighty-four women and seventy-nine men joined the Bauhaus during the summer semester.¹ While Gropius was successful in gaining the public's interest in his new school, the ratio and sheer number of female students led to concern.

Despite Gropius' claim that the Bauhaus prioritized students' identities as talented craftspeople over their genders, there was immense unease over how to handle the female students at the school. Due to the intrinsic experimental quality to the Bauhaus, specifically in the promoted sameness and blending of craft and fine art, taking on an exceptionally absurd

¹ Ulrike Müller, Ingrid Radewaldt, and Sandra Kemker, *Bauhaus Women : Art, Handicraft, Design*. (Paris: Flammarion, 2009), 9

gender ratio in 1919, when women were not typically supported in such environments, would have potentially pushed the envelope too far. As a new-found school, the Bauhaus required a stable reputation in order to grow and succeed. In an effort to balance the promise of equality between genders while simultaneously maintaining a strong reputation, Gropius proposed that, “immediately following acceptance, an exact selection be made, above all among those of the more strongly represented female sex.”² However, each workshop denied or discouraged female attendance, often arguing it as best for both the medium and the women themselves to avoid the so-called heavy crafts.³ This led to the Council of Masters’ creation of the Women’s Department.

The Women’s Department (Frauenabteilung), also referred to as the Women’s Class, was an umbrella term given to the female-oriented preliminary course which was then followed by limited workshops available for female students, including the Pottery Workshop, Bookbinding Workshop, and the Weaving Workshop (Weberei). After fulfilling their primary courses, women were steered towards these three workshops. However, the already limited number of media that welcomed women dwindled almost immediately. Despite the initial encouragement of women to work with ceramics, the Pottery Workshop’s form master Gerhard Marcks vehemently rejected female presence in the medium, claiming that it was best for “both their interest, and for the sake of the workshop.”⁴ Despite the promises of equality at the Bauhaus, the Women’s Department was clearly meant to limit the female students. In stark contrast with the other departments that contained workshops defined by a set of related media or practice, this department was distinguishable by gender. The department itself was also relatively crudely

² Minutes of the Master Council, 20 September 1920, Bauhaus Archive, Berlin, 20

³ Anna Rowland, *Bauhaus Source Book*. (Leichhardt: Sandstone Books, 1997), 82

⁴ Herkner (Master’s Dissertation), 1984, 43

established, lacking a strong official curriculum until 1921, when it was directly tied to the Weaving Workshop.

There is some blurriness in the precise timeline that led to women being strongly associated with the Weaving Workshop, but ultimately, by a conscious process of elimination, women were firmly directed to the Weaving Workshop at the Bauhaus by 1922. The process of elimination that transpired via the initial denials from masters of most Bauhaus workshops, the merging of the Women's Department with the Weaving Workshop in 1921, and the eventual dissolution of the Bookbinding Workshop in 1922, led to female domination of the Weaving Workshop as it became the only recommended option for women. As the Weaving Workshop was the only option left for female students, there was no longer a need for a department. Due to weaving being at the bottom of the hierarchy of arts and crafts, the medium was still regarded as lowly amongst the other media at the Bauhaus and understood to be associated with women, but the Weaving Workshop became labeled by its medium rather than a part of the Women's Department.

The action of corralling the women into the Weaving Workshop was intended to lessen the threat of female presence due to the workshop's lower inherent value. The workshop's low value was made apparent in the materials offered to the students within it. The scarcity of materials was most severe in 1920, when it was still a portion of the Women's Department, and Stölzl recalled that "Gropius referred [the weavers] to various old ladies in Weimar from whom we could beg for leftover fabric, and thread, lace, veils, little pearl bags, leather, and furs."⁵ While the Bauhaus had very little materials for most workshops upon establishment, the women were encouraged to look elsewhere. Raw materials became more accessible in 1921, after the

⁵ Gunta Stölzl, Monika Stadler, and Yael Aloni. *Gunta Stölzl : Bauhaus Master*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 58

merge, but the experimental techniques used with the few accessible materials and the understanding of their materials' potential taught by the form masters within the workshops associated with the Women's Department remained in the Weaving Workshop afterwards.

There were exceptions at the Bauhaus, both in women who avoided the Weaving Workshop and men who interacted with it. Marianne Brandt and Grit Kallin-Fischer were women who operated in the Metal Workshop and Lou Scheper-Berkenkamp made her way into the Mural Painting Workshop, but these were rarities.⁶ There were also a few men who worked with the designated female workshop, such as Max Peiffer Watenphul, a German painter who made his own handweaving at the Weaving Workshop in 1922, and Johannes Itten and Georg Muche, who worked as Form Masters within the Women's Department. However, while Watenphul's work with textile was unique amongst male students at the school, it remained as a slight detour from his painting, rather than a continued practice. Watenphul only dabbled in the Weaving Workshop after it had merged with and shaken off its placement under the Women's Department as well, keeping him out from under the "women" label. Muche worked as the Form Master in the Weaving Workshop from 1919 to 1925, where he taught and produced etched designs for weavers in the workshop. However, Muche never moved to touch the material. Muche, despite operating in the textile department for six years, existed in a position of leadership over the women and proudly bragged that he had never once worked with the weaving materials himself.⁷ He went as far as requiring that his students sketched out their woven work before it was produced on the on the loom. The forced reliance on two-dimensional strategies by Muche was able to occur due to the lack of weaving theory at the time. Coincidentally, in 1925 and 1926,

⁶ "Students," Bauhaus Kooperation, last modified 2019, <https://www.bauhaus100.com/the-bauhaus/people/students/>

⁷ Anna Rowland, *Bauhaus Source Book*. (Leichhardt: Sandstone Books, 1997), 82

Bauhaus weaving theory came into existence through essays written by a second wave of student weavers, but in its absence in 1920, two-dimensional strategies were also used to teach weavers. This assisted Muche in avoiding the potentially damaging reputation that was attached with working near a woman's medium.

Itten taught the preliminary course at the Bauhaus and, until 1921, contained a separate, female-oriented version that was part of Women's Department.⁸ All of these men deliberately left distance between themselves and this particular practice, which effectively kept their hierarchical reputations intact. While a handful of women were able to join other workshops and a few men interacted with textile, this workshop remained intended for women. Itten's preliminary course, as well as Muche's teachings as Form Master, supported the initial connection between two-dimensional observational techniques and visual design with weaving.

Upon spending the majority of 1919 deciding which workshop to go into as a new student, looking from stained-glass painting to mural painting, by 1920, Gunta Stölzl found herself in the Weaving Workshop.⁹ Stölzl had spent most of her prior artistic career working with two-dimensional materials, which ironically lent itself well to Bauhaus weaving courses in 1920. Before arriving at the Bauhaus, Stölzl worked as a red cross nurse during Word War I. Over the course of her time as a nurse, Stölzl produced studies of the individuals and landscape around her. Working primarily with graphite, watercolor, and colored pencil, Stölzl often produced scenes of town settings with a few individuals in the foreground, seeming to capture a moment in time. She also created portraits of ordinary townspeople, such as women spinning wool or a shepherd at work. The pencil and brush strokes are looser and less controlled in some works

⁸ Anna Rowland, *Bauhaus Source Book*. (Leichhardt: Sandstone Books, 1997), 82-83

⁹ Gunta Stölzl, Monika Stadler, and Yael Aloni. *Gunta Stölzl : Bauhaus Master*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 49, 54, 58

over others, suggesting that Stölzl varied her time spent on each, but the artwork consistently displays awareness of mathematically accurate perspective and proportions. These are fine art fundamentals that were intrinsic to painters in 1920, including the masters that taught the preliminary course and weaving at the Bauhaus.

During this year, within the new-found Women's Department, Stölzl produced her first woven work, "Cows in Landscape" ("Kühe in Landschaft").¹⁰ Through the combined elements of Johannes Itten's female-oriented preliminary course, Georg Muche's hand in the Weaving Workshop, Stölzl's recent past of two-dimensional work, and an overall lack of weaving theory, Stölzl created what she would later refer to as picture comprised of wool. Painting at the Bauhaus, from an educational perspective, was valuable for establishing the fundamentals of art from a fine art perspective that was to be applied to other forms of creation, rather than simply teaching students how to create a painting. Bauhaus Masters that were painters, like Itten and Muche, were given leadership roles at the Bauhaus to serve this purpose. Itten had a hand in the development of most Bauhaus students, including Stölzl, until 1923 when he was removed by Gropius who aimed to move away from a handmade, expressive aesthetic to a rational, mass produced one.¹¹ Itten was described to be a dedicated master and prioritized the spiritual aspects to color and artistic practice in general. In 1919, while attending Itten's preliminary course and determining which workshop to pursue, Stölzl jotted in her diary that "...Perhaps it seems as if Itten is imposing his own emotional world, but it really is different. Forcing you to be completely clear about your own emotions, to analyze them, you can go even deeper. I will

¹⁰ Michael Siebenbrodt and Elisabeth Reissinger. *Bauhaus Weimar : Designs for the Future*. (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2000), 107

¹¹ "Johannes Itten," Bauhaus Kooperation, last modified 2019, <https://www.bauhaus100.com/the-bauhaus/people/masters-and-teachers/johannes-itten/>

gladly admit too that he influences me, and I am not at all ashamed of it.”¹² Itten’s teachings resonated with Stölzl’s process, and she proceeded to write multiple other diary entries on them, mainly over the course of 1919 to 1921. Within a year of taking his course, she created her first handweaving with this perspective in mind.

By 1921, George Muche, Weaving Workshop Form Master, was joined by Helene Börner, a female weaver who was given the position as Craft Master and provided materials and handlooms to the weavers. However, during Stölzl’s construction of “Cows in Landscape,” she had limited supplies and solely painting instructors to rely on. Naturally, Stölzl’s first handweaving was highly pictorial as it was informed by the painters she was being taught by and her previous work with two-dimensional materials. Stölzl was twenty-three at the time and entering her second year at the Bauhaus. In 1968, Stölzl recanted that she had “borrowed a vertical loom during the summer holidays of 1920 and wove [her] first little Gobelin.”¹³ She described this moment fondly, hinting at how unaware she was of her artistic future in 1920, simply “borrowing” the loom as if she did not intend to use it again. While “Cows in Landscape” was Stölzl’s first weaving, the composition and aesthetic appear fully developed and complex.

The entire weaving is a mere thirty centimeters tall and fifty centimeters long, but is packed with color, detail, subjects, and movement. The title, “Cows in Landscape” is very straightforward and places a familiar image in viewers’ minds, but the image on the surface is extremely abstracted and not so straightforward. The subjects in the weaving are simultaneously discernable and ambiguous. On the surface, the weaving is pictorial in quality, and a viewer can

¹² Gunta Stölzl, Monika Stadler, and Yael Aloni. *Gunta Stölzl : Bauhaus Master*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 49

¹³ Gunta Stölzl, Monika Stadler, and Yael Aloni. *Gunta Stölzl : Bauhaus Master*. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 58

dissect bits of creatures and landforms amongst the aspects of design and various organic shapes. The entire image is subtly framed by the corners of the weaving. The upper left-hand corner clearly displays a sliver of moon against a fading gradient of light grey to navy shades, while the upper right corner is bursting with bright, warm tones of yellow and orange, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. An abstracted mountain range and valley lies between these two upper corners where the contrasting colors blend, and vague architectural-looking patterns intermingle with red and purple traces of a city as they run down from either side of the mountains to the lower two corners. There are also stripes of olive green lining the bottom of the image, likely portraying fields or a meadow. In the center of the image, there appears to be at least two cows and a body of water. The cows are facing away from one another, and it is unclear where one cow ends and the other begins regarding one another and the landscape around them. Despite the countless rich and wild colors that reside in the “frame” of this image, the center of the weaving is mainly made up of a few light tan hues with a splash of light blue and even smaller hint of red. This effect drives viewers’ eyes straight to the brightest, stand-out point of the image- the center. The exploration and technical use of color is likely informed by Bauhaus painting.

Itten’s influence is clear in the conscious, exciting, emotional use of color. “Cows in Landscape” resembles Stölzl’s painting style in 1920, rather than her work from a few years earlier during her time as a World War I nurse. The work she created during her time as a nurse resembled fine art studies. They were created with the intention to capture an essence of realism through visually accurate proportions, appropriate colors when pigments were used, and common scenes in everyday life. Her style moved away from realism and toward abstraction and her awareness of color transformed. The use of color in “Cows in Landscape” is generous, covering a massive tonal variety, often including an entire range of shades in a single color.

However, despite the extensive range of color in such a small piece, they are extremely organized and controlled. Not only are they physically contained in individual shapes and sections, but the inherent shades seem to have been developed and placed consciously. It is undetermined if she dyed the material herself, but Stölzl's range of warm tones, cool tones, or traces of other colors mixed within a single shade, suggests awareness of the nuances in color and the effect they can have if used properly. This is extremely apparent in the center of the image where Stölzl uses a wide range of warm and cool toned shades of similar tan colors to make out the shapes of the cows against the very similarly colored background. This understanding of pigment, combined with her knowledge of two-dimensional fine art, is apparent in the deliberate steering of viewers' gaze through the work and harmonious use of color.

While Itten specifically influenced Stölzl's work, Bauhaus painting in 1920 played a major role in informing "Cows in Landscape." A universal Bauhaus style in any medium and in general was nonexistent due to the changing of priorities at the school over time, aesthetic and otherwise. However, at a set time, certain goals and ideologies were encouraged in the approach to work produced at the Bauhaus. Stölzl's work communicates directly with 1920 Bauhaus painting strategies, priorities, and theory. Painting at the Bauhaus, while an independent artistic medium, was used partially as a teaching tool at the school. Five of the six masters appointed by Walter Gropius by 1920 were painters, so it was inevitable for students working with other mediums to pick up on painting strategies. In 1923 he stated that, "Numerous impulses, which still unused await their realization by the world of works, came from modern painting, which was breaking through its old boundaries." This quote explains Gropius' intentions on the intended use of painters' skills at the Bauhaus. His vision for education at the Bauhaus included

a balance of formal education that fine artists like painters are aware of, and craft.¹⁴ Painting at the Bauhaus, from an educational perspective, was valuable for establishing the fundamentals of artistic practice from a traditional viewpoint. This was meant to be applied in a variety of different media and creative processes, rather than simply teaching students how to manufacture a painting. Itten was the painter in charge of the preliminary course at the time, making him the first to influence and teach the eager and malleable student minds. While masters grew in number and diversity in preferred medium over time, in 1920, artistic fundamental teachings to students coursed solely through painters. Painting held an influential position over all media in 1920.

Aside from painting alone being an influential force, certain aesthetic and theoretical aspirations reigned in 1920. Gropius' priorities in early Bauhaus products involved the exploration of spirituality and a handmade aesthetic. Students were exposed to these ideas specifically in the preliminary course. While these concepts were meant to be universal at the Bauhaus, not aimed specifically at painters' work, they were still taught by two-dimensional creators. Painters guided the way of how to express these concepts visually, and while the intention was for students to apply these ideas to their own media, the presence of Bauhaus painting theory and lack of Bauhaus weaving theory allowed for an easy transfer of these teachings to the surface of a woven work. Powerful Masters like Itten explained fine art fundamentals and the spiritual aesthetic present in 1920 to students through two-dimensional forms, inadvertently allowing focus to be drawn away from the inherent qualities of weaving materials and towards aspects like composition and design. While Itten and the spiritual aesthetic he taught did not last longer than 1923 at the Bauhaus, they were keystones in 1920

¹⁴ Michael Siebenbrodt, and Lutz Schöbe. 2009. Bauhaus : 1919-1933, Weimar-Dessau-Berlin. Temporis. New York, USA: Parkstone Press International

Bauhaus painting and influenced creators including Stölzl. Reflecting two-dimensional visual techniques, aesthetic, and theoretical priorities, “Cows in Landscape” speaks to Bauhaus painting in 1920.

While painting strategies clearly influenced Stölzl’s work in the pictorial features of the weaving, she seemed to go beyond the two-dimensional characteristics. The foreground and background of the image on the weaving are indistinguishable and seem to blend as one, as if they have been woven together within the surface image. As she was new to the medium, having limited prior experience with textile, she seemed to have found enjoyment playing with this new medium’s intrinsic characteristics that two-dimensional practices were not capable of offering her. She specifically played up each opportunity to blend throughout the work, from layering similar colors near one another in the center, experimenting with a gradient in the upper left corner, to overlapping general organic shapes and architectural patterns. The inherent qualities of wool, yarn, and mohair, the materials Stölzl used for “Cows in Landscape,” create entirely different effects than graphite, painting, or colored pencil if she were to create this scene in both. The end result was an artwork that was in conversation with two mediums, but ultimately stood as an object of its own. Stölzl exhibited curiosity in the three-dimensional medium as she played with an extensive number of different textile-exclusive layering and blending techniques in a single, very small work.

The size of this weaving is standout amongst the other woven works she proceeded to create over the following Bauhaus years. It is unusually small, offering an approachable feeling to those who encounter it. “Cows in Landscape” is extremely intimate in character, an object that can be held and fully encountered in a viewer’s hands. The scene itself is rather calm, full of familiar, representational objects regardless of the abstraction. One interpretation of the image

involves the suggestion of a nativity scene, which would further contribute to the intimate nature of the entire weaving.¹⁵ The tiny size of the work allows it to be read almost like a window into this scene. The entire effect of the work's size is one of comfort and approachability for viewers, but also Stölzl herself. "Cows in Landscape" shares more similarities in size with Stölzl's two-dimensional work than her weavings. This work stands in a time of transition and experimentation between mediums. In 1920, Stölzl created more drawings and paintings than weavings. Her comfort zone, despite joining the Women's Department's Weaving Workshop, still resided in drawing and painting. Having recently completed Itten's course, two-dimensional artistic training, and in the process of fully understanding which workshop she would like to pursue, "Cows in Landscape" was her first major step towards weaving. Tentatively beginning to work with the foreign materials in 1920, Stölzl found safety and comfort in the familiar size of the object. The size was not as intimidating to take on as a first textile project, compared to runners and wall hangings, and it was the typical size of her two-dimensional work. Following "Cows in Landscape," the only weavings this size she created were designs for wall hangings. Weavings this small were only used as primary steps to a final product, rather than the finished product itself.

"Cows in Landscape" is highly pictorial, small in size, and explorational of the inherent qualities in weaving as a practice. Gunta Stölzl, the future master of the Weaving Workshop, captured the state of the workshop in 1920 and one female student's transition from one medium to another, through these elements in her first handweaving. As the Weaving Workshop was identified as part of the Women's Department at the time, "Cows in Landscape" was created during a transition year of the workshop. With her two-dimensional past experiences, classes,

¹⁵ Anna Rowland, *Bauhaus Source Book*. (Leichhardt: Sandstone Books, 1997), 89

and painting masters, she clearly investigates the inherent qualities of her new medium for the first time in “Cows in Landscape.” This handweaving comes off as curious and experimental as Stölzl accomplishes the feat of tying two-dimensional and three-dimensional aspects together in a single work. As a student working in a new medium, with past personal experiences and current professors who are more familiar with an opposing medium, this is an achievement. The state of initial experimentation with and exploration of the three-dimensional materials, yet with a heavy draw from pictorial elements from the preliminary class and two-dimensional oriented Form Masters, is descriptive of the Weaving Workshop in 1920. “Cows in Landscape” represents Stölzl’s artistic beginnings as a weaver during a year in which the sand under the Weaving Workshop was shifting.

Chapter Two

In the lack of instruction, absence of prior weaving experience, and little “serious” artistic pressure, combined with a ragtag, random assortment of textile materials, Anni Albers, alongside the rest of the weavers at the Bauhaus, were able to encounter the material in an entirely different context than woven work had been presented to them previously. After accepting her fate in a practice she feared was too “sissy,” Albers used the meek outward perception of weaving to her advantage by transforming the unique limitations of the Weaving Workshop and inherent restrictions in textiles production to fuel her practice itself. Despite her concern that the essential characteristics of her medium were weak and weighed down by external restrictions, by 1925, Albers found artistic depth and strength in her threads through uninhabited exploration of materials, conceptual allure in working with a medium that came with restraints, and the application of contemporary artistic design that had been previously reserved for more traditional artistic media.

Focusing primarily on two-dimensional work, Annelise Elsa Frieda Fleischmann, better known as Anni Albers, had no prior intention of becoming a Bauhaus weaver. Much like Gunta Stölzl, Albers practiced two-dimensional artistic work before her Bauhaus years. However, Albers took a slightly different path to the Bauhaus. She came from an affluent family and until 1919, painted as a student under the impressionist painter, Martin Brandenburg, before attending the Kunstgewerbeschule in Hamburg for two months that same year. Her time at the Kunstgewerbeschule was short-lived as she tired quickly of her sole task, designing floral wallpaper, and soon turned her interests toward the Bauhaus.

Despite taking different directions in their future woven work and nature of their practice, Anni Albers held similar artistic interests to Stölzl’s preceding her attendance at the Bauhaus and

faced the same fate once admitted into the school as well. However, by the time Albers was accepted, she entered an entirely different Bauhaus than Stölzl did. Albers first applied to the Bauhaus in 1922, but she was rejected. However, she managed to gain admission on her second attempt that same year. By the time Albers entered the Bauhaus, the Weaving Workshop had been firmly set as the sole option for female creators. In 1977, Anni Albers recalled with light amusement that she was first “tempted by the glass workshop not only for the material itself but for the fellow [she] saw from a distance handling that workshop: Josef Albers.” Despite Anni Albers’ immediate interest, there was unfortunately no room for her in the department. This pattern of rejection followed with woodwork, metal, and wall painting. With each workshop came a reason she was not qualified to join, until she eventually reached the Weaving Workshop, “the least objectionable choice.” Anni Albers was dismayed, claiming that she was “looking for a real job” and weaving was “too sissy.” As an individual with previous, serious artistic training, Albers was looking to continue advancing herself forward in the art world. Working with a medium of lower status would inevitably take a creator back in the eyes of the public. However, it was mandatory that Bauhaus students joined a department, so if she wished to move forward as a student, Albers was left with no choice.

It took Albers two years of attendance at the Bauhaus to finally accept her fate and officially join the Weaving Workshop. Having left the Kunstgewerbeschule only a few years prior due to her disinterest in applied arts, the Bauhaus posed a unique opportunity for a woman who was looking “for a real job” as an artist. However, she was quickly disappointed as she was firmly ushered into practicing a medium that shared outward similarities with her work at the Kunstgewerbeschule. Crafty, decorative, and useful but lacking artistic acknowledgement, were characteristics of a practice Albers had already encountered and decided to leave behind. In

joining the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop, Albers was aware that the amount of success and credit a creator could achieve was restricted from the start if they worked with threads. The Weaving Workshop, while out from under the blatantly confining label, “Women’s Department,” was still distinguished as a department and practice that inherently lacked seriousness and strength. Despite the newness of the entire school’s existence, the Weaving Workshop had been characterized as a feminine department that produced craftwork. As female creators had been seen as unequipped for creating in other media, the rare appropriateness of this medium branded the department with inferiority and modesty. This perception bled into 1922, when Albers finally surrendered her fight for a position in a workshop other than weaving. The complexities in perceiving and classifying woven work carried past Albers’ Bauhaus years, as even in 1961, she contemplatively stated, “Whenever I find myself listed as a craftsman or... as an artist-craftsman, I feel that I have to explain myself to myself or occasionally, as here, to others.”¹⁶ Albers showed self-awareness of her own tangled emotions towards the labels her work is categorized under. While this statement is reflective of her practice post-Bauhaus, conversations of craft versus art, and form versus materiality have remained consistent across her entire body of woven work, beginning with her first woven creations.

Albers recognized the inherent artistic potential of her newly assigned medium through uninhibited experimentation with the material. While the general understanding of the medium was one of utilitarian and decorative value, upon acquainting herself with the material itself, Albers along with the other weavers were able to release themselves from the external constraints in supposed use of textile through play. The weavers were able to meet the raw

¹⁶ Anni Albers, *Conversations with Artists 1961, On Designing*. Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan Univ P, 1971, page 61

materials. With minimal training and traditional artistic expectations, alongside random, limited material options, the weavers had no choice but to approach woven work from a new direction. Bauhaus weavers' early work became grounded in experimentation, "unburdened by any considerations of practical application, this unrestrained investigation of materials resulted in amazing objects, striking in their newness of conception in regard to use of color and compositional elements..."¹⁷ The priority in weavers' first objects was to build an understanding through unrestrained construction that resembled a deliberate form of play rather than application for a specific use. As woven objects were understood as craft, meant to serve a specific purpose, this practice defied the understanding of the medium. Engaging with the inherent elements in the material in this manner elevated the material from craft to art as the purpose it was made to serve was one of creative development beyond pictorial design. Before acquainting one's self with the material at the Bauhaus, the general understanding of textile was one of utilitarian use and applied decorative work, both of which do not directly defy what is understood as artistic practice, but are often not perceived on the same level. By removing traditional textile application purposes, the material became truly raw and malleable without implications placed upon it, allowing Albers and others to reprogram their understandings of textile and the possibilities of what can be created with it.

Albers' reintroduction to textile established her mindset of Bauhaus weaving as an experimental art practice, completely different from textile work in factories, that left substantial room for massive strides in artistic development. This process was familiar to other students working in craft-oriented mediums. While not operating in the textile department, students like

¹⁷ Anni Albers, *Conversations with Artists 1961, On Designing*. Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan Univ P, 1971, page 62

Fritz Kuhr, who worked with wood and metal, recalled his first Bauhaus sculptures as complete objects, “but always with the knowledge that [the students] were playing around pointlessly.”¹⁸ Kuhr interpreted the early experimentation with this “craft” as a process void of depth and intent. He then explained that he had also previously attempted to create an aluminum umbrella but failed due to the workshop not being as equipped as an industrial firm in handling projects of this nature. While Kuhr’s relationship with his materials was different than Albers’ in the status, perception, and in the physical process of creation, he proceeded to have “a great important experience” that grew with each object he designed, until reaching the point that he created “with a seriousness and fervor which only a child can bring to its work. [He] had never been so free, so relaxed...in [his] entire life.” Kuhr experienced a breakthrough through uninhibited play with material similar to Albers’ experience with textile. With the removal of intent, the aluminum umbrella in Kuhr’s case, design in its purest form became the only priority in production. The experimentation in material at the Bauhaus was not intended to be blind play, but rather a subconscious means of feeding a student’s understanding of artistic design regardless of the medium.

Following the flood of creation and open experimentation in the sudden rebirth of the medium at the Bauhaus, the Weaving Workshop developed more systematic training to match the altered mentality of textile production. The specific artistic practice of Bauhaus weaving crystallized into what Albers called “appropriateness of purpose.” Looking back on her years at the institution, she explained that “concentrating on a purpose had a disciplining effect, now that the range of possibilities had been freely explored.”¹⁹ The natural next step to strengthening the

¹⁸ Fritz Kuhr on his early days at the school: interview in *Bauhaus 1928*

¹⁹ Anni Albers, *Weaving at the Bauhaus, On Designing*. Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan Univ P, 1971, page 39

practice was to add discipline to the medium. The intended effect would not be confinement of creativity, but rather the addition of a strong core to the practice and a reason behind production beyond serving a solely utilitarian purpose. In order to pull weaving further in an artistic direction, training and conscious preparation of the work offered validity to the products being created.

Albers conducted this procedure both on paper and with the material itself. The practice of planning out a weaving two-dimensionally was adamantly advised by the master of the Weaving Workshop, Georg Muche, who remained in the position until 1927. His control over the Weaving Workshop was shared with Helene Börner, who had previous experience as a handicraft instructor. While Börner was never given the official title of master, she assisted with the hands-on elements of weaving, as Muche refused to physically interact with the material at all. However, Börner left her position in 1925 and Muche's encouragement and implementation of two-dimensional designs for wall hangings and otherwise remained in use. These two-dimensional works were meant to serve as visual guides for the tedious layouts intended to be recreated on the loom. Albers' two-dimensional work in 1925 was representative of the shift in the Weaving Workshop's production of work and simultaneously carried value as separate art objects as they allowed her to expand upon the same concepts she explored in her weavings. Albers often plotted out her woven work with the material itself through the production of swatches, rather than ink and paint, as threads better emulated what the surface of the final product would look like in terms of harmony between fibers. However, she continued to produce two-dimensional weaving-related work. In Albers's 1925 "Design for Wall Hanging," the preplanning is visible (fig. 2). Albers' use of multiple forms of media in her artistic practice

allowed for a wider, more comprehensive exploration of the artistic themes Albers was interested in, as the physical possibilities on paper differ immensely from textile.

The designs created on paper, like “Design for Wall Hanging,” did not necessarily have to be executed in textiles to have value and relevancy in Albers’ work. While Albers had prior training in two-dimensional artwork, she encountered it in a different manner at the Bauhaus. Contrasting her prior experience in impressionist painting, these images have an entirely different nature to the brushstrokes, color palette, and overall tone and intention in the work. These works have validity as individual art objects beyond being blueprints for weavings. Albers’ 1925 “Design for Wall Hanging,” depicts an object that had yet to be created. She articulated the confinements of the wall hanging’s perimeter within her painting and progressed to explore the design that would appear on the surface. The entire, rectangular body of the wall hanging is described in a vertical, portrait manner, but the design on the surface of the weaving is primarily horizontal. The whole work is comprised of four colors with little contrast to one another, bringing the focus of the wall hanging to the design aspects. The only shapes involved in the design are elongated, rectangular forms that appear as stripes or solid blocks of color. Each shape is repeated at least once and shares similarities in line thickness with one another, making them appear as if they are interconnected and aware of each other. Even in Albers’ two-dimensional work, motion and layering are pushed to the limit. The stripes are laid next to one another, fluctuating in shade and tone, but often take on the same form, making it impossible to perceive foreground or background. While the layering is not literal and lacks the texture and difference in material consistency found in textiles, there is value in focusing solely on design over material.

Much of Albers' work was anchored in ideas of restriction, and her two-dimensional work was no exception. Albers' practice and interest in restriction was deeply tied to the impact of working with physically challenging materials, but working two-dimensionally allowed Albers to explore these concepts in a strictly visual manner. This medium suited design explorations in a different manner than textile, as fabric swatches are more beneficial in viewing the way threads of different matter interact with one another physically and visually. By planning out a woven work before it is executed, this action is restricting in what is created on the loom. It is not an inherently negative or stunting action, but it does alleviate the freedom found in the production of objects during Albers' early years in the Weaving Workshop. This intentional play and surprise at the outcome was replaced with a specific strategy and an intended result. Albers' two-dimensional work offered her a place to create an image of what the strictly design facets to the surface of her weavings would look like. While it may seem counterintuitive exploring restriction in a far less physically demanding medium, Albers was able to focus exclusively on notions of restriction in design itself, without the distraction of physical difficulties that working on a loom brings. Albers chose to create "Design for Wall Hanging" out of thread that same year but created countless other two-dimensional designs for weavings that were never translated into textile. Albers' two-dimensional work allowed her the flexibility of design exploration, as works on paper could be created more quickly and frequently than weavings, especially in 1925 before technological advancements like the jacquard loom allowed for mass production.

Albers' interest in restriction is a thread that runs through her entire practice, but rather than appearing in the materials involved with two-dimensional work, it appears in the composition of the design depicted. Albers had previously expressed disbelief over the existence

of a new artistic style, but by 1925, her two-dimensional works stood for more than planning tools and artistic works in their own right. They also served as an uncomplicated means of exploring anti-composition. The nature of the style is meant to reduce the number of decisions an artist has to make by undoing the composition itself. While the layout of Albers' work is complex in the careful placement of lines and blocks of color, it is restricted to the organization of such elements.

Albers also recanted that she learned the majority about form through Paul Klee's teachings.²⁰ Art historian Jenny Anger elaborated on the specific design principles that had an effect on Albers' work, specifically two: multiplication (Vermehrung) and polyphony (Polyphonie). The rules of multiplication appear simple enough in Albers' typed notes from his class...any defined unit (Einheit) can be multiplied by a) pushing it (Schiebung), or repeating it, across or down the page; a') repeating it with interruption (Schiebung mit Unterbrechung), inevitable with some shapes, such as triangles; b) displacing it (Verschiebung), or repeating it intermittently; c) mirroring it (Spiegelung); or d) rotating it (Drehung)."²¹ The principle of polyphony is less technical, as it refers to the combination of different elements to create a melody or harmony. Both of these principles are present in Albers' 1925 "Design for Wall Hanging," but are even more evident in the three-dimensional version of the work, "Untitled Wall Hanging" (fig.3). With only four colors present in the entire work, mustard yellow, forest green, beige, and cream, the lack in range and tonal contrast between the colors allows for the design of the work to take the forefront.

²⁰ Neil Welliver, "A Conversation with Anni Albers," *Craft Horizons* (July/Aug. 1965)

²¹ Jenny Anger, *Anni Albers' Thank You to Paul Klee*, page 159-160

Klee's design principles appear in the structure and visual character of Albers' 1925 wall hanging. While Klee's teachings seem restrictive, as the instructions for multiplication are specific and confined, there is malleability amidst the constraint through slight manipulations in design. Albers' understanding of her own practice in weaving was intertwined with restraint in terms of physical limitation. Albers found fascination in the physical difficulty of her practice compared to other media and the inventiveness that comes out of manipulating of a difficult-to-operate medium.²² This perspective, intertwined with a design language that shared theoretical similarities, brought conceptual value to the entire work. Different aspects of Albers' untitled wall hanging appear to form a repeating pattern upon first impression, but her actions in simply shifting elements ever so slightly manipulates that vision. There are parallels in line thickness, number of layers, and similarities in the size and placement of forms. However, when the work is split in half horizontally or vertically, each half is not identical. When split diagonally, the structural design aspects are mirrored exactly, but the colors are not (fig. 4). The impact of the entire work is one of spatial complexity and careful, deliberate execution of the nuances necessary to create such a balanced design. The untitled wall hanging is very visually interwoven and difficult to follow when attempting to view it as a whole, which relates to the polyphonic character of work. One solid stripe appears to bleed into three when thinner strips of another color are made to look as if they have been layered on top. The stripes along the left and right edges of the entire weaving create an effect of hazy, semi-opaque layers of their own. The entire surface of the work- lines, blocks of color, layering, forms, and more, come together to create a melody. This also relates to Albers' connection with anti-composition as the deductive framing format allows the surface image to be centered and offered to viewers all at once, at full

²² Anni Albers, *Conversations with Artists 1961, On Designing*. Middleton, Conn: Wesleyan Univ P, 1971, page 63

force. While the mathematical mechanisms are at play in the structure of the work, the impact of the entire wall hanging is one of natural chemistry as all the parts move in sync.

Pointed experimentation, lacking the uninhibited quality, but in the same curious nature of execution, existed in the production of this work. Albers' woven work, like her untitled wall hanging from 1925, begged the question of what textile could and should do in terms of use and in the art world. Albers was quick to play with new materials like acetate, which was first available commercially in 1924. It had initially been created in the form of fiber in 1923, but it had many issues with discoloration when in contact with certain fumes and pollutants, so it often ruined the entire fabric if it was spun with other materials. Cellophane, rayon, and a handful of other materials were also created during this period of time. Albers's untitled wall hanging in 1925 featured solely cotton, silk, and acetate. Within a year of its existence, Albers had already completed a finalized work with the new material. Albers had not only finished the time-consuming task of creating a large-scale textile work within the first year following the public release of this material but had also executed an elaborate two-dimensional preparatory sketch. Albers must have begun the creation of this work almost immediately after the release of this substance.

Beyond the texture and visual quality of the material, her apparent hunger to adopt materials that are not necessarily developed for producing art objects, shows that the original, experimental nature of Albers' work persisted. Throwing herself head-on into freshly created materials, she played with the impact weavings could have on their surroundings. Alongside materials with new visual characteristics, Albers experimented with noise canceling material, which might not be capable of changing a work as significantly when being viewed, but could

affect the nature of the location it is placed in, especially if that work is hung against a wall. In the case of noise canceling material, woven work hung against a wall can already affect the way sound bounces off a structure, but with the application of this new material, sounds would likely become even more muffled. While Albers' explorations in contemporary materials generally revolved around visual impact, the materials that were noise canceling allowed the work to actively change the surrounding environment in a different manner by affecting bystander's senses beyond sight and touch.

The inclusion of contemporary material in Albers' 1925 wall hanging added visual and conceptual value to the work. This work used some traditional materials alongside a modern material, specifically acetate. Acetate is a clear material and is capable of contributing a unique shiny and translucent quality to the woven work. The delicate and sheer nature of this material could offer a wall hanging and other woven work a completely different tone. Acetate has different characteristics than the more traditional fibers Albers was accustomed to. On the positive side of acetate's traits, aside from its shimmering visual characteristic, acetate is known to be fairly easy to drape and hang and is rarely affected by decay and mildew.²³ As for acetate's negative characteristics, it can melt in heat, has little elasticity, and is not a strong material on its own. These are the notorious traits of the material in the contemporary world, but in 1925, Albers also had to wrestle with the issues of discoloration and fading of textile using acetate. The rapid and successful incorporation of this fussy new material that behaved entirely differently than traditional fibers in a large-scale wall hanging was a feat. In terms of restriction, Albers inevitably would have had to grapple intensely with this material in order to produce a

²³ Bernard P Corbman, *Textiles : Fiber to Fabric*. 6Th ed., international. The Gregg/Mcgraw-Hill Marketing Series. New York: Gregg Division, McGraw-Hill, 1985, page 20

sizable work using acetate so soon after its creation that remains in such pristine condition nearly one hundred years later.

While these materials were new to Albers and the world, the manner in which Albers conducted her experiments was entirely different than when she first learned how to work with textile. The main difference between experimentation in material in Albers' 1925 work versus her beginnings in weaving is that the act of playing with new material was no longer uninhibited and directionless. In regards to material, "this state of practice without theory changed dramatically when several weavers, between 1924 and 1926, stopped focusing on pictorial objectives, began thinking about the requirements of the loom and malleable threads, and spelled out their aims using choice words...through woven experiments and essays."²⁴ The weavers, including Albers, experienced a major shift in perception and intent behind their work. Albers had already established a design aesthetic that had reached a point of consistency by 1925, so there was less play in composition or lack thereof. Despite the newness of materials like rayon, cellophane, and acetate, and the adaptations and preparation required in understanding how to use them, the reason behind using these materials was not random. Beyond expanding the visual impact of her work and exploring ideas of restraint in the struggle to learn how to apply these materials in a productive manner in her work, Albers' hunger for the most contemporary materials quite literally ties her work to the most innovative developments in production.

Working in a medium that was not necessarily viewed as current or important in the art world at the time, Albers' work pushes the agenda that textile can carry significant, complex, and contemporary conversations. Combining contemporary forms of design and shape in her work

²⁴ T'ai Lin Smith. *Bauhaus Weaving Theory : From Feminine Craft to Mode of Design*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014, page 41

alongside physical materials that were fresh and new to the entire world were moves Albers made to signal the relevancy of her medium. This work also reflected the recent shift in Bauhaus priorities orchestrated by Gropius. This was made apparent in Gropius' hiring of Maholy-Nagy whose work was in conversation with Russian suprematism, as well as Gropius' proposal for incorporating math, physics, and chemistry into the curriculum. However, the shift was clearest in Gropius' adamant call for a "new unity" between art and technology, which he declared in reference to the Bauhaus exhibition held over the summer of 1923.

His lecture, 'Art and Technology: A New Unity,' "marked the public emergence of a man purged of craft-romanticism and utopian dreams."²⁵ This lecture, alongside Gropius' actions to alter the course of Bauhaus production caused a visible and conceptual shift in the objects produced at the institution. With concepts of mass production, utilitarianism, and technology being encouraged of the students, Albers' untitled wall hanging addresses these notions in her practice. While some technologies that altered the production of weaving had yet to be invented, like the jacquard loom, Albers was able to alter her production through the physical attributes of the actual product. This wall hanging was produced two years after Gropius' actions and call for "a new unity" between art and technology, so this work was in accordance with the most contemporary artistic demands of the institution. Albers directly tied her work to these discussions at the Bauhaus, as well as its new location in Dessau, through the conscious, physical incorporation of acetate and other contemporary materials into her practice.

Albers' understanding of weaving before encountering the materials was one of suppression in terms of artistic recognition and career aspirations. Upon getting her hands on the

²⁵ Frank Whitford and Julia Engelhardt. *The Bauhaus: Masters & Students by Themselves*. Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1993, page 139

threads at the Bauhaus, the lack of structure within the Weaving Workshop led to an unconfined creative boom as the women shed their understanding of the medium as craft and prior expectations on what objects were to be created with textile. This purposeful play breathed artistic life in the raw material in the creators' eyes, allowing them to then redetermine what and how objects should be created with textile. The creation of textile, while a finished product of its own, served as a tool to feed future projects. The textile was a product that was successfully conceived, but the entire process was not complete yet, as it was to be used to make other objects, such as furniture, wall hangings, and more. With the eventual addition of pre-planned intentions in the work, the themes of restriction returned, but fed the work conceptually, rather than killed the newborn artistic characteristics in Bauhaus weaving. Albers continued to discuss this concept in her work, in conversation with the design language used in other media by the artists working around her.

She tied modern design concepts, specifically Klee's design principles and ideas like anti-composition that were related to restriction, with a medium that struggled to be recognized as an art form. The themes of restriction are woven within and simultaneously tied to the work from external sources, but this lack of recognition of the medium as an art form made it stand out from other media. Aside from the physical characteristics that differentiate woven work as a medium in its final state, such as the incredible malleability in layering and exposing different parts of the work at once, and use of new innovations in material for reflective and sound manipulating qualities in a wall hanging, the context the medium functioned in in 1925 set the medium aside as an entity of its own. The process of creating a weaving, from the preplanning procedure to the back-breaking process of manipulating a loom, contributes to the uniqueness of the medium as it creates complexities in its relationship with art and craft as creators submit

themselves to the hard work. Albers recognized these complexities and used them to her advantage. After acquainting herself with the loom and discovering the artistic capabilities in the raw material, she tied her initial distain, the outward understanding of textile in art, with the grueling physical, restraining nature of the practice, and melded it with design that was in conversation with the most contemporary elements of form. Albers' final woven products of 1925 were informed art objects bearing design elements with contemporary art world relevancy in a medium that had not been previously recognized as capable of reaching Bauhaus artistic significance.

Chapter Three

By 1933, the Bauhaus' final location in Berlin had been fully shut down. Gunta Stölzl and Anni Albers had both left a few years prior to the closure, and by 1935, had their hands firmly placed in individual artistic endeavors. These two figures each pursued distinct paths in weaving after their Bauhaus years, with Albers expanding her relationship with the medium further in the institutional direction while Stölzl proceeded to blend the lines between production and art. Both of their bodies of work contained lasting impacts of the Bauhaus, but both women artistically evolved and effectively cultivated their practices out from under the roof of the school.

Stölzl left the Bauhaus as a master rather than a student one year after Albers' departure from the institution. During their time at the Bauhaus, the two women expelled a great deal of energy working together to advance the education provided, value of the lessons and materials, resources, tools, and overall status of the entire department alongside their fellow weavers. Stölzl's title of master allowed her the control and flexibility required to push an entire department forward. With just under a decade of experience weaving, she was able to apply teachings in design and the material itself to the curriculum where the previous masters were lacking. As an artist who had joined the department unwillingly as a student in 1919, she understood the baggage that came with the practice at a deeper level than any other figurehead of the department had previously. With this additional awareness, Stölzl was able to comprehend the underlying frustration held by many newer weavers and used it to tackle and reclaim the traits that kept the department as a lesser entity than the rest.

While Albers was never a master of the department, she helped push the department forward in infusing the practice with artistic theory. Albers wrote her first two essays on weaving in 1924 and continued to write on the Weaving Workshop, her perspective on design, and on the Bauhaus itself. Alongside Stölzl, Albers worked to make sense of the institution that had initially condemned them to a medium they did not wish to pursue. As artists who quickly rose to the top of their workshops, they worked to successfully incorporate the ever-evolving nature of the institution into their work. The lessons, manifesto, and general nature of the Bauhaus became tied to their creations and careers both within its walls and outside of them.

After removing the institution from the artists, the nature of the objects created by the students have changed, despite being infused with the teachings of the Bauhaus. From the most literal perspective possible, artists created work of the institution. At the Bauhaus, the objects were owned by the institution, namely Gropius, and were created for the institution. Especially in the case of the Weaving Workshop, the lines between art, school, and work were blurred constantly. At the beginning of the Bauhaus, the Weaving Department had so little material that it was not capable of producing enough completed and sophisticated objects to be profitable as potential selling points. However, as the weavers grew in skill through teamwork and the presence of Helene Börner, who offered materials, hands-on education that Muche lacked, and tools, the department and the creators within it grew in strength and size. In time, textile became abundant and of high enough quality to become selling items. Bauhaus weavers, including Stölzl and Albers, attended Christmas markets and held general, smaller sales in between seasons to distribute their work, the Bauhaus name, and ultimately to make money for the institution. In almost no time at all, Bauhaus textile became the most lucrative of all items being produced at the Bauhaus. Weavers were more than students and artists; they became one of the main sources

of income for the entire school. While Gropius had already instilled an underlying interest in mass production and “useful” objects in early to mid-1920, weavers were the most affected of all workshops by the presence of “work” in a traditional sense at the Bauhaus. Beyond being productive artists, they were making money. Under the Bauhaus, the objects that they created did not belong to them. Objects under all departments were claimed by Gropius, but weavers in particular had the most potential in terms of keeping the school afloat.

Stölzl’s work outside of the institution began taking place before she had even completed her time as a Bauhaus student. In March of 1922, she improved her skills in dying textile at an academy in Krefeld. Dying textile was a more dated skill, as pointed out by Albers later, but Stölzl saw it as an opportunity to expand the Weaving Workshop. She took her newfound techniques and applied them to her work back at the Bauhaus, before reviving the dye laboratory at the Bauhaus. It had been inactive for years, but Stölzl, alongside Benita Otte who had also attended the classes in Krefeld, enabled the women of the Weaving Workshop by educating them with the new skill and providing another space for them to function in.

Upon reaching her master status by 1927, Stölzl channeled the vast majority of her energy into running the Weaving Workshop until 1931, when she left permanently. However, she had already laid groundwork in other projects before leaving the Bauhaus. During her time at the Bauhaus, Stölzl assisted Johannes Itten, after he had left the institution, in setting up a weaving workshop outside of Zurich, Switzerland. Her work with Itten at this workshop was fairly brief and relatively undocumented. In 1924, the workshop was set up in Herrliberg, near Zurich, Switzerland called Ontos Weaving Workshop. It is uncertain when it ended, why it was set up, who benefitted from it, and who the weavers who worked there were, but Stölzl

clearly had her hand in the project. Not only was this notable as she would continue to do the same later on her own in her future, but it was one of her first projects as a practicing weaver that was not Bauhaus based. While she may or may not have been a practicing weaver at this workshop, she was given the credit of assisting in establishing it and it likely fed her post-Bauhaus future. By showing leadership at the Bauhaus and establishing a workshop as a student, it hinted at her post-Bauhaus future and her leanings towards the traditional “work” aspects of the Bauhaus as she placed herself in positions of influence and leadership.

In terms of the Bauhaus enterprise, addressing aspects of school and work in its curriculum, Stölzl and Albers went in very different directions when it came to the women’s future after graduating from the academy. While Albers did not go back to school following her Bauhaus years, she remained tied to other institutions, showcasing her work at shows, academies, and taking part in projects assisting similar organizations. Much of her work was utilitarian in nature, as she earned her Bauhaus degree in 1930 for a noise canceling, light reflecting wall hanging for an auditorium she produced in 1929. The wall covering was composed with cellophane and resides at the Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundeschule. However, she did not pursue a career in the mass production of textiles, or a practice more closely associated with traditional notions of work. The objects she developed shared a conversation with these themes, in the way that Bauhaus objects would occasionally discuss themes of usefulness without necessarily having to be useful, but Albers’ practice was different. She created art that was the articulation of space and focused on things that limited or productively overdetermined composition.

In 1944, Albers created a textile for the Rockefeller Guest House which was light reflective and could sparkle in the darkness (fig.7). In order to create this unique effect, she produced fabric made out of copper yarn, white plastic, and cotton chenille. Beyond continuing to experiment with difficult fibers, Albers was exploring the areas surrounding her work. With the use of shiny materials, she played with light space, as the mere material choices were made to reflect and illuminate the room itself. Much of her work in the mid thirty's to forty's reflected her late Bauhaus work, like the noise canceling wall covering. Albers was not making these objects to be mass produced or to establish a business but was continuing to blend the lines of art and industry, as well as complicating the idea of design and composition (fig.8). In her work "Intersecting," Albers' design language suggests a lack of preciousness, but clear playfulness with ideas of symmetry and asymmetry. Her signature stripes and layering are present, alongside a variety of curved lines that worm through the layers laid out in threads. The entire effect is one of a stable yet moving image. The stripes are executed in bold, even swipes, yet the thin, squirrely lines appear to climb up and down between the panels. The visual impact is one of subtle complexity in the lack of traditional compositional constraints.

Gunta Stölzl pursued a different path following her leave from the Bauhaus. Her departure from the Bauhaus was already significantly rockier than Albers' sendoff. Stölzl may have left the institution with a Bauhaus degree and status as the only female master of the school, but her leave from the Bauhaus was not by choice. Due to external political pressures in 1931 that ultimately led to the closure of the school, Mies van der Rohe, the headmaster of the school at that time, was forced to remove Stölzl from her position as master and the school as a whole. The school was ultimately closed in 1933 by the Nazis who were upset by the Bauhaus being "one of the most obvious refuges of the Jewish-Marxist concept of art," but it is not entirely clear

why Stölzl was forced to leave her position at the institution.²⁶ Her status as a woman with power may have been controversial, or perhaps her marriage with a Jewish man. She had also been openly irked by racial disputes at the Bauhaus, calling the students to rise above it and writing about it in her diary even as early as 1920.²⁷ However, while Mies van der Rohe felt pressure from the surrounding community to remove her from the school, the students were deeply dismayed by the choice. She had built up a strong community of weavers that was admirable to the rest of the student body. Following her unfair dismissal from the Bauhaus, the students focused an entire issue of the school newspaper about Stölzl and her accomplishments as a student, master, and artist in general. It was made clear that the reason for her removal from the school was not due to lack of skill or talent, but discriminatory political circumstances.

With the institution in her past, she applied her teachings and experiences to building a business from the ground up. After her years of being a Bauhaus master, she moved to establish her own weaving workshop. With her prior leadership skills as a professor and experience helping establish the workshop with Itten, she was fully equipped to begin her own. However, she did not find the same success Albers did immediately. Stölzl's first weaving business failed quickly. Her first workshop, S-P-H-Stoffe, was founded in Zurich alongside two other Bauhaus graduates, Gertrud Preiswerk and Heinrich-Otto Hürlimann. S-P-H-Stoffe only lasted until 1933, unfortunately having to close almost immediately due to lack of money. However, she was able to establish her second business under the name, "S-H-Stoffe" after Preiswerk left the workshop. Despite Preiswerk leaving the workshop, Stölzl was able to run her company until

²⁶ Whitford, Frank, and Julia Engelhardt. *The Bauhaus : Masters & Students by Themselves*. Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1993, page 299

²⁷ Müller Ulrike, Ingrid Radewaldt, and Sandra Kemker. *Bauhaus Women : Art, Handicraft, Design*. English-languageed. Paris: Flammarion, 2009, page 44

1967. The workshop was not overwhelmingly successful and went through phases of financial hardship but brought in enough money for Stölzl and her family to survive.

With the presence of sufficient tools, knowledge, weavers, resources, and a workshop under her control, Stölzl was able to produce finalized products at a faster rate than her time at the Bauhaus. The works she created were mainly wall hangings but held immense variety in terms of design. As she was creating strictly for consumers at this point, rather than a balance between school and work, the design was likely based more heavily off of what was bringing in money. Of the works created from the 1930's to 1940's, her works ranged from pictorial objects like plants and animals, to the grid like structure in design more reminiscent of Albers' work. Works like "See" ("Sea"), a wall hanging Stölzl produced in 1952, featured her signature illusions in layering color and form on the surface image of her weaving, but also featured more pictorial elements than had been visible in her Bauhaus work (fig.5).

Fully formed birds and semi-visible sailboat forms could be easily discerned from the image. However, if the image is to be understood as a still-life, it is still extremely abstracted as all of the forms are presented in a two-dimensional and side-profile manner. The work shares visual similarities to a picture, yet design language of a pattern, allowing the entire weaving to occupy a middle ground. The title alludes to the entire work possibly referencing a landscape, further pushing the tension between pictorial image and design in the work. Alongside her work in this style, Stölzl also produced a few untitled wall hangings in a graphic, more anti-compositional style during the late 1950's to early 1960's (fig.6). Her practice seemed to evolve and fluctuate, almost in communication with itself, as it was driven by personal aesthetic interest and ability, alongside the type of work that was in demand. During this time, Stölzl also created

a handful of children's books for her daughter Yael, seemingly out of love and passion rather than work. While she continued working two-dimensionally on occasion, Stölzl's future in weaving referenced a practicality and utilitarianism in a different manner than Albers' work did.

Without the institution, the women continued to explore concepts picked up at the Bauhaus in their own, independent lives. There were no longer specific expectations and constraints placed on the women, but Bauhaus themes of production and usefulness resided in their work after the closure of the school. Albers continued to practice art in association with institutions, but threaded themes of literal usefulness in the work. Her work moved beyond the traditional materials and expectations of wall hangings, as they became objects that altered noise levels and light quality in a room. The aesthetic was one dictated by use rather than pictorial value. Her weavings also took the form of interior design, as she later worked to design the dorms in Harvard Grad School in 1950. Stölzl, on the other hand, applied her experiences of practicing her craft at an institution like the Bauhaus, into a more "craftsman-like" direction. She created her work to survive and support herself. The skills she learned allowed her to create aesthetically stunning, desirable products that customers would be interested in purchasing. Her work had artistic value as well as physical, monetary value as she wove a support system using her learned skills to create a life for herself and her family.

Stölzl channeled her energy not only constructing weavings but also building opportunities in the form of workshops that allowed for a high level of productivity. She revived, rebuilt, and created workshops from nothing that benefitted her practice as well as others'. The idea of craft to industry was a very present and physical part of her practice. While her weavings were pictorial, these concepts did not show up as much in the way her works

looked, but in the setting they were created in. Stölzl created her own workshops, whether it was bending the Bauhaus to her will, or building workshops for herself and others. The unseen process behind the weaving, beyond the material, is intertwined with her practice. The Bauhaus taught Stölzl how to manifest her craft into an industry within the institution, and it remained a common core of her future. The workshop was her laboratory, as the “tenet of the Dessau Weaving Workshop was to develop affordable, durable, contemporary textiles for a broad market” (Bauhaus Textiles, 97). Her latter years at the Bauhaus, as one of the few weavers that chose to move to Dessau, allowed for a seamless conceptual transition into Stölzl’s work post Bauhaus.

These concepts of mass production in theory combined with Stölzl’s experience with the Bauhaus understanding of craft. The year prior to becoming master, she wrote that “the mechanical weaving process is not yet far enough developed to provide the possibilities existing in handweaving, and, since these are essential for the growing creativity of a person, we deal mainly with handweaving; for only the work on the hand loom provides enough latitude to develop an idea from one experiment to the other....”²⁸ Despite wanting to see the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop take as many steps forward as possible, Stölzl did not recognize the potential in the new technological advancements in weaving at the time. This seemed to be at odds with her post-Bauhaus work, because by 1935 Stölzl’s practice revolved around selling to customers and could have benefitted from the ability to create weavings at a faster rate. However, the handmade process and aesthetic to Stölzl’s post-Bauhaus work was a necessary part of her practice. Her recent post-Bauhaus work was made to be an artistic touch to the homes of her consumers. These wall hangings were no longer produced for the purpose of artistic

²⁸ Gunta Stölzl, “Weberei am Bauhaus” in OFF-SET *Buch und Webekunst*, No.7 (1926), page 405

learning as a student, or with the intent of being placed in an exhibition. By holding herself to working in manners that encouraged compositional decisions and control by the weaver rather than the machine, rather than switching to more technical methods, Stölzl and her work walk the thin line between craft, art, and objects of mass production.

As creating wall hangings was Stölzl's means of survival by 1935, holding onto her ability to make creative decisions and liberties in her work through handweaving kept her from making objects void of artistic value for the sole sake of being sold. Aside from her initial shove into the Weaving Workshop, the school was able to characterize her practice, but not contain it. She reshaped, built, and became the master of the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop, and simultaneously participated in education and work opportunities outside the Bauhaus. She was firmly rooted in craft and industry. The dying workshop and denial of technical weaving, yet emphasis on the workshop itself, a place intended for and implied to be beneficial for production, allude to Bauhaus themes. Beyond the educational experiences Stölzl had at the Bauhaus, the knowledge gleaned from having to fight to reach the position of master and struggle with material that she had never worked with previously allowed her to find value in different aspects of it, as well as have her practice shaped by it.

Albers' practice was also shaped, consciously and unconsciously by her experiences at the institution. On the topic of technology in the latter years at the Bauhaus, Albers was invested in how the advancements could be applied to weaving. For its ability to produce more and at a faster rate, in connection with her conceptual interests, technology in weaving matched Albers' work well. Combining the most innovative design language with the most recently created substances and having it be produced on contemporary versions of the loom naturally connects

the dots on a surface level. However, use of technology in weaving connects further with Albers' practice in terms of theory.

Technological improvements to the looms used to create weavings was one of the major differences in weaving during the final years of the Bauhaus and those following. The jacquard loom, which had been invented in the early nineteenth century, became far more advanced by 1930 and established a different method in the process of creation. Jacquard looms are incredibly difficult and time consuming to set up, but it is significantly easier to generate mass produced weavings on after it has been prepared. This does not take away from Albers' interest in her physical struggle with the material, and even contributes to her interest in anti-composition. Once the loom has been set up, it alleviates much of the weaver's hand in the physical process of creation that are present in handweaving. As the jacquard loom involves a system of punched, wooden cards that control the weaving and allow the creator to immediately apply any design of their choice, there is some loss of control in the matter. Weavers were still able to make design choices, but essentially through the process of feeding the machine instructions. For Stölzl's experience at the Bauhaus and especially her work following, this would be suffocating to the power found in the creativity behind her work. However, this technology and method of working fed Albers' practice. Despite the Bauhaus being in both of their pasts, these two women were both deeply influenced by the elements present at the school, especially in terms of the manifestation of technology in the latter years. As vocabulary like mass-production, utilitarianism, usefulness, and technology were pushed around, both of these women were forced to respond in one way or another in their Bauhaus work and in the years following.

In the few years following the Bauhaus, Albers' work splits into different intentions behind creation. More than industry, Albers touches on the themes of usefulness she likely picked up at the Bauhaus. Looking at the college dorms, sound absorbing material, and light reflecting work, this is hard to deny. On the other hand, her works like "Intersection" remain in conversation with the design language she had been practicing for years prior. While it has clearly evolved visually, Albers fluctuates between making the design versus the composition of material and entire body of the weaving a priority. She explored both throughout her career but used the design aspects to suggest awareness of the modern art world at the time. Rather than college dorms and rooms of a guest house, these works were designed for museums. These objects were manifested to be placed in structures intended for art. They were meant to be read, comprehended, and acknowledged as art objects. Even later in her practice, much of her work that resides in museums like MoMa or the Getty is noted to be gifted by the designer herself. Albers' work was made for museum walls. Even looking at scholarship, Albers post Bauhaus path is documented and followed more closely as it aligns itself more closely with artwork. The types of work written on Albers and her work are mainly exhibition reviews and general critiques of her work, both during the Bauhaus and afterward. As for Stölzl, there is significantly less written on her practice following the Bauhaus years, as Stölzl did not place her work in locations made to be critiqued and mused over in the manner Albers' was. In recent years, the route Stölzl chose to take can be better connected with the themes of the Bauhaus, as it is in direct communication of what a segment on the Bauhaus work was supposed to look and behave like. Residing outside museums, off the walls of the white cube, but rather finding significance in the homes of consumers, characterizing and decorating the walls of the local community, remains indicative of art practices associated with the Bauhaus.

Both Stölzl's and Albers' works were ultimately designed with an intended use and with specific spaces in mind. The awareness of their work and potential consumers informed their practices of creating art objects both at the Bauhaus and in the years following. These two women made waves under the roof of the Bauhaus, and not only absorbed the academic knowledge but worked alongside, against, and for the Bauhaus. They characterized their practice and the space it was carried out in, ultimately rebuilding the Weaving Workshop with their own hands. These "lessons" are visible in both Stölzl and Albers' careers post-Bauhaus. The institution may have allowed them to understand their capabilities, especially when challenged with new aesthetics, goals, and roadblocks, but Stölzl and Albers ultimately left the Bauhaus as individual, self-aware weavers that contributed theoretical, visual, and contextual value to the formerly underestimated artistic medium.

Conclusion

The artists and objects produced at the Bauhaus are extremely saturated areas of research, especially for a school that only lasted fourteen years. Clearly, despite its death in 1933, the students, masters, and overall themes of the Bauhaus continued to thrive despite the lack of the physical structure binding them together. If anything, the nature of the school was able to spread further despite the tragic circumstances, without the walls of the institution enclosing them. It is almost ironic that the Nazi's forced termination of the institution likely led to a much more widespread and integrated acknowledgement and interest in the school and more specifically, what it stood for. Whether it is true or not, after the fall of the school, "...Mies summed up this process in a pointed fashion when he declared that only an idea had the power to broadcast itself worldwide."²⁹ The former students' and masters' work was not about the institution, as it was just the birthplace and hub for an idea that had the potential to be carried. It affected the students so much in their time there that after the Bauhaus closed it had no impact on the idea, as it was already an entity of its own. Regardless of the specific reasons behind the widespread recognition of the Bauhaus, scholarship conducted on the institution is dense and thorough, leaving few gaps for further broad claims.

With the sheer amount of research already conducted on the institution and the rising amount of literature on the Weaving Workshop, which had previously represented a niche to some level, taking on the Bauhaus in this work may seem counterintuitive. However, there is immense value to discuss the work and events on a specific scale, especially when it has become easy to draw sweeping conclusions on individuals and bodies of work. Anni Albers and Gunta

²⁹ Zinsmeister, Annett, and Adeline Seidel. 2010. *Update! 90 Jahre Bauhaus - Und Nun? = 90 Years of Bauhaus - What Now?* Berlin: Jovis, page 35

Stölzl were both prominent figures who had made names for themselves through their practices and the roles they played at the Bauhaus and afterward, but there are still discussions to be had on the specificities within their work, the content involved, the context it existed in, and the continued relevancy today.

On the surface, it is crucial to offer credit where credit is due, but the weavers' relationship with the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop can be explored further. The state of the Weaving Workshop had been completely transformed from the start of the Bauhaus to the end. Against all odds, it grew wings from within and built itself into a workshop that ultimately quietly powered the institution and enabled artists that were previously unseen. Following the Bauhaus years, while Stölzl clearly took this relationship in a literal sense as she thrived when she was able to sculpt and build workshops in her name, both women continued exploring their relationships with the context and school. There were major differences in their practices, especially after exiting the Bauhaus Weaving Workshop specifically, but both Albers and Stölzl's work remained in communication with Bauhaus work as they worked to dictate what that meant for themselves.

While these two women took separate paths following their Bauhaus years, both of their work was exhibited at the Bauhaus Archiv in 1976, as well as a few years earlier in a more general overview of Bauhaus weaving. Albers' work was more typically associated with museum exhibitions at this late point in her career, but this was a little more unusual for Stölzl's practice. However, in this particular exhibition, there is little documentation, yet both women's works were addressed as art objects on the same playing field. Albers' work continued to be displayed in art organizations worldwide consistently following her passing in 1994, as she was

an international creator whose work had reached a level of notoriety that kept it in demand. Stölzl passed about a decade prior, and her life work was displayed in her own solo exhibition put on by the Bauhaus Archiv. This exhibition traveled through five different locations in 1987 and 1988, including Berlin and Zurich. While she had already passed at this time, the capacity of her work to hold its own in a solo exhibition suggested the relevancy and power behind her practice, yet the location awareness of the exhibition, as specifically Zurich was a place Stölzl was able to curate her own workshop and blend ideas of art and work, spoke volumes in the representation and understanding of her life's work.

In the modern era, both women's work continues to be displayed in museums, usually presented in general Bauhaus oriented exhibitions and weaving focused displays. In 2020, Stölzl and Albers' work can be viewed in fabric samples at the Getty and more finalized pieces are on display at MoMa. Nearly one hundred years later, these women's works are being read, interpreted, and critiqued as art objects. This may be at odds with some of the contexts they were produced in, especially those regarding usefulness, but these objects are being viewed with a different lens than prior years as they are now being actively preserved and learned from.

This thesis argues that the work of Albers and Stölzl, specifically through a range of critical weavings, mark major turning points and transformations in the recognized capabilities and perception of the medium by weavers themselves, as well as the greater art world. There is timeless relevancy to their work as these creators produced products that were visually revolutionary and rich in theory, especially in a Bauhaus workshop perceived incapable of reaching such complexity. This work continues to be recognized in the contemporary era, especially as many twenty-first century artists have experimented and produced work in textiles.

These two women, beyond the recognition they and the Weaving Workshop have received thus far, have captured integral information on this medium's transformation between their threads over the course of the Bauhaus years. In their work, Albers and Stölzl responded and reflected on the inherent properties of their medium, but even further than that, they redirected the course of what it meant to produce a weaving as an art object. Despite arriving at an institution that held unkept promises, these two women ripped the doors off the supposed uses, properties, and possibilities for Bauhaus weaving.

Appendix



Figure One
Gunta Stölzl
“Cows in Landscape” (“Kühe in Landschaft”), 1920
Gobelin technique, in part slit formation
Warp: cotton. Weft: wool, fine mohair
30 x 50 cm



Figure Two
Anni Albers
Design for Wall Hanging, 1925
Guache, graphite
13 3/16 x 10 7/16" (33.5 x 26.5 cm)
MoMa. gift of the designer, 395.1951



Figure Three
Anni Albers
Untitled Wall Hanging, 1925
Silk, cotton, acetate
50 × 38 in. (127 × 96.5 cm)
Die Neue Sammlung, Munich 363.26



Figure Four
Diagonally cut images of 1925 “Untitled Wall Hanging”
Shows identical nature of design



Figure Five
Gunta Stölzl
Semi gobelin technique 1952
100 x 180 cm



Figure Six
Gunta Stölzl
Double weave technique 1964
155 x 120 cm



Figure Seven
Anni Albers
Drapery material (Used in the Rockefeller Guest House) 1942–1944
Lurex, cellophane, and cotton chenille
137 x 36" (348 x 91.4 cm)
Gift of the designer
451.1975



Figure Eight
Anni Albers
Intersecting, 1962
cotton and rayon
15.75 × 16.5 in. (40 × 41.9 cm)
1962. 12. 1

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