The Bauhaus Brand 1919-2019
The Victory of Iconic Form over Use
Philipp Oswalt

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- A highly readable history of the Bauhaus with an unconventional perspective
- A panorama of associations with the name and term 'Bauhaus' and its undiminished potential as a brand
- A survey of the movement's lasting importance and influence a century after its birth and more than eight decades after its end as an institution

The Bauhaus was distinguished neither by function nor by use but rather by symbolism. Whether square, triangle, or circle; whether Wilhelm Wagenfeld's lamp, Oskar Schlemmer's 'Kopf' (head), or white cubes with flat roofs: the Bauhaus created iconic visual symbols and a style that is neither functional nor social but visually striking.

Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus, from the outset sought to develop the school into a brand – and he succeeded. More than eight decades after its forced closure, the Bauhaus is more present than ever before in consumerism, politics, and culture alike. It has become a participative brand that escapes centralised control entirely. It has been, and continues to be, forged collectively by countless designers, manufacturers, and consumers. Yet its founders' initial pledge for functionality and social commitment remains unfulfilled.

In this book, Philipp Oswalt, former director of Foundation Bauhaus Dessau, explores the development of the Bauhaus brand and its use around the world, illustrated with some 950 images that highlight the vast range of Bauhaus appearances from a century.

Philipp Oswalt is a professor of theory of architecture and design at Universität Kassel. He was director of Foundation Bauhaus Dessau between 2009 and 2014.