

**Reference Service & Evaluation Assignment - Source Review: "Bauhaus: Building the New Artist"**

IS 504 AO FA19: Reference and Info Services

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"Bauhaus: Building the New Artist" is an online exhibition published in 2019 by The Getty Research Institute on the occasion of its exhibition "Bauhaus Beginnings."

Immediately the website interface is attractive, with a bright yellow background and a bold white title that expands across the entire screen. A clear navigation map in the top right corner provides headings for each subject and subsection explored (History, Form and Color, Matter and Materials, Body and Spirit), and the website's author and citation resources are linked in the top right corner. At the foot of the page are the J. Paul Getty Trust logo, copyright, homepage link, policy information, terms of use, and contact information.

A black arrow at the bottom of the page encourages the user to scroll down for more information. On the scroll, a short introduction to the Bauhaus school is provided, followed by a prominent link inviting the user to access the first section—"History Overview." On the click-through, the user lands on the first subsection of the History section of the website "History of the Bauhaus," which presents an abundance of descriptive text, historic photographic images.

The online exhibition's content is relevant and accurate. The text is direct and informative; its reading level does not assume previous knowledge of the content, yet its content may assume that visitors are students or visitors to the exhibition. All images and quotes are clearly cited. One of the features of the website is the portfolio image viewer. By clicking on any of the images, the viewer opens a full-frame viewer which contains a collection of the images for each subsection. Each image may be enlarged for closer analysis. At the end of each essay are citation notes for the text. Navigational arrows at the bottom of each essay encourage the user to go forward to the next section or backwards to the previous section. The design of the exhibition is thus very linear in design; Though it is possible to skip to specific sections, the design encourages users to follow a predefined path.

At the end of each section there are link to Interactive Exercises, which offers three focused activities that viewers may use to learn more about particular aspects of the Bauhaus movement (and the Getty's exhibition)—such as color theory, construction, and choreography. These activity pages incorporate video media dynamic animation. Each activity is brief, encouraging users to continue on to the next section. At the end of the exhibition there are also links to About This Exhibition, Events, and Related Resources where users can be turned on to

the temporary Getty exhibition and (internally and externally produced) digital-information resources about the Bauhaus movement.

The whole website seems meant to be explored in one about-an-hour-long setting. Its use seems predominantly designed to accompany school groups before or after their visit to the exhibition, or by art or art history students who want a brief overview of the subject. It would be an excellent candidate for an elementary or middle school art class's LibGuide for use in classrooms, or as a recommended resource for high school or college students who want a brief overview of the subject. Yet its introductory level and free access does not bind it to a supplementary instructional role, as the "Bauhaus: Building the New Artist" online exhibition which is accessible to anyone with internet.

Considering the criteria for evaluating reference resources presented in Carol A. Singer's "Selection and Evaluation of Reference Sources," I would consider this a valuable resource to recommend to anyone interested in art and culture. Its content is particularly suitable for students at the beginning level to the topic who are performing explorative rather than scholarly research. Its 2019 publication asserts the timeliness of the resource. Though its impetuous may have been to accompany a specific exhibition, its use as a learning tool expands beyond that finite use. The user interface is clear and simple to navigate, and all links are up to date. The website is clearly attributed ("branded") to a recognizable publishing authority on the subject matter, which attests to the accuracy and quality of the resource. This authority is elevated by the fact that the contributors to the website are all mentioned, and a link to the Getty's Contact Us webpage provides addresses, phone numbers, and emails to those involved in the publication. Additionally, the lack of a paywall increases the accessibility. Areas that the digital exhibition may be improved may include increased accessibility to users with disabilities (such as "read aloud" features), and increased findability through the inclusion of an index.

#### Works Cited:

Casciato, Maristella; Fox, Gary; Rochester, Katherine, *Bauhaus: Building the New Artist*, accessed November 3, 2019,

[https://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions\\_events/exhibitions/bauhaus/new\\_artist/](https://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/exhibitions/bauhaus/new_artist/)

Singer, Carol A., "Selection and Evaluation of Reference Sources," Eds. Linda C. Smith, & Melissa Wong, *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (Libraries Unlimited, 2016).