Diversity at the Bauhaus

the lifes of Friedl Dicker and Arieh Sharon

Collage showing works and pictures of Friedl Dicker and Arieh Sharon, by the author

The life journey of the two Bauhaus students Friedl Dicker (fig. 1) and Arieh Sharon (fig. 6) couldn't be more different — while Arieh Sharon was one of the most important architects working in the new founded state of Israel, Friedl Dicker was being murdered on 09. October 1944 in the Auschwitz extermination camp. The diversity of characters among the Bauhaus student body and their different paths after leaving the school can be reconstructed by taking a closer look at the two very diverse biographies of Friedl Dicker and Arieh Sharon.

Friedl Dicker (1898-1944) had already a background in photography and textile design, before she attended Johannes Itten's art class in Vienna. In 1919 she moved with him and a group of fellow students to the Bauhaus in Weimar. During her studies, she was considered to be one of the most talented, versatile students of the school (fig. 2). With an enormous dedication, she attended the classes of Georg Muche, Lyonel Feininger, Oskar Schlemmer and Paul Klee, thus promoting her status as being talented at many fields of art.

From 1923 onward, she worked in cooperation with her fellow student Franz Singer on different types of designs: together they developed toys, graphics, textiles, book covers and even stage settings and theater costumes. With their architectural work and proposals for multifunctional interiors they soon gained a good reputation (fig. 3 and 4).

During the 1930s, some major changes took place in her life: she split up with her partner Franz Singer, and then fled to Czechoslovakia in 1932 because of her communist political involvement. Her sense for pedagogy and her intuition for the impact of art education on children became her new purpose in life.

Especially after her and her new husband's deportation to Terezin in 1942 she encouraged hundreds of children to take part in her art classes. She was convinced that art is channeling imagination and emotions, and thus helping to express the children's thoughts and feelings (fig. 5).

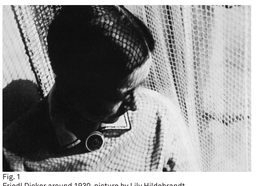

Fig. 1
Friedl Dicker around 1930, picture by Lily Hildebrandt

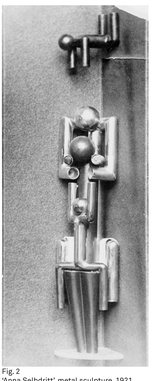

Fig. 2
'Anna Selbdritt', metal sculpture, 1921

Fig. 3 and 4
Städtischer Kindergarten Goethehof, Wien II, 1932
axonometry and interior picture, picture by Pfitzner-Haus

Fig. 5
'Underwater fantasy' by Ruth Guthmannova (1930-1944), created during the drawing classes in the Terezin ghetto

Fig. 6
Arieh Sharon around 1928

Fig. 7
Arieh Sharon with his wife Gunta Stölzl in the garden of the master's houses

Fig. 8
Paper study
from the Albers's Vorkurs

Arieh Sharon (1900-1984) emigrated already during the third Aliyah in 1920 from Poland to Palestine. Being a member of the zionist youth organisation HaShomer HaTzair he helped to establish the Kibbuz Gan Shmuel and worked there as a beekeeper. Since he wanted to participate as an architect in building up the state-to-come of Israel, he moved to Germany to study at the Bauhaus in Dessau from 1926 to 1929 (fig. 7 and 8). Sharon was one of the first students visiting the newly established architecture class under the direction of Hannes Meyer, for whom he also worked in the following years as a construction supervisor for the ADGB Bundesschule Bernau (fig. 9).

In 1931 he returned to Tel Aviv and started his career as an architect, building an office (fig. 10) and several housing settlements for the Histadrut (fig. 12-15), the Israeli worker's organization. From David Ben Gurion, he was comissioned to set up a masterplan, called the Physical Plan (fig. 11), for the newly founded state of Israel in 1948. This plan regulated the settlements of immigrants that came to Palestine during and after the Second World War and provided an overall organisation of infrastrucutre for the whole country.

Anna Wülleitner

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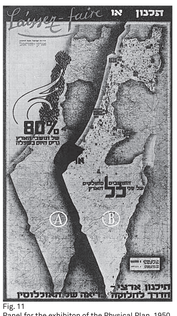

Fig. 11
Panel for the exhibiton of the Physical Plan, 1950, Tel Aviv Museum of Art

Fig. 9
ADGB Bundesschule Bernau, aerial view around 1929

Fig. 10
Beit Brenner, 1934-1935,
headquarter of the Histadrut

**the Hagana, that later became the Israeli Defense Forces, had its national headquarters in this building complex*

Fig. 12 cooperative worker's housing Frishman Street*, 1936-1939, picture of the couryard

Fig. 13 housing complex on Frishman street, 2019 picture of the courtyard, *ow*

Fig. 14 housing complex on Frishman street, 1936-1939 street view

Fig. 15 housing complex on Frishman street, 2019, street view, *ow*

Alle Abbildungen aus dem Archiv der Autorin.