

(left to right)
Siefried Pütz, CORNER DESK, appr. 1930s.
Paul Bay, BED, appr. 1940s.
CARVED PICTURE FRAME, artist unknown.

(bottom, from left to right)
BUILT-IN AQUARIUM Camphill House, Aberdeen, Scotland
MUSIC STAND by Wharton Esherick 1951
Paul Bay Camphill CHAPEL 1949.



Dornach Design

the inspiring world of
anthroposophical design

ANNE-KATHRIN WEISE



Hermann Ranzenberger and Rudolf Steiner
BED for House Duldeck, appr. 1915-1917.

Dornach *Design* by Reinhold J. Fäth (Moebelkunst 1911-2011, Futurum Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland) is an opulent book about anthroposophically inspired furniture from 1911-2011. It is grandiose and extensive, with an abundance of illustrations, many of them in full color.

The book is endlessly engaging and one can't help but become inspired by the Gestalt of a piece of furniture. Perusing the pages, one realizes the richness and diversity of Anthroposophical design and its ever-new individual paths inspired by the foundations laid by Rudolf Steiner a hundred years ago.



Dornach Design *[continued from page 43]*

Anthroposophical design continues to live and contemporary design which embodies these principles is featured as well.

In the preface, Fäth explains the concept and practice of anthroposophical design. Fäth is not only an art historian, but master craftsman and furniture designer as well. He has also contributed a new impulse to the world of art/design therapy, the curative application of the principles of design.

Fäth classifies anthroposophical design by means of style criteria, which are ever-changing and quite controversial. Fäth brings together artists with diverse creative impulses and this leads to exciting individual biographies of the artists represented in the book, in many cases for the first time. In this way, we see how individual and personal the paths in anthroposophy are.

A most interesting chapter for me, due to my research background in Bauhaus, is the one in which Fäth compares two important design streams at the beginning of the last century—anthroposophical design and Bauhaus. There were many connections between these two movements, especially during the first years in Weimar. Later, however, there were fundamental differences, particularly under the guidance of director Hannes Mayer.

The reader will find many new ideas in this book, including the first comprehensive overview of the theme of anthroposophical style criteria. The whole design of the Camphill movement has its initial appearance in a book of this kind. Camphill House in Aberdeen, Scotland, where Karl König lived, is represented with a few photos, some from Karl König's study. Curative design in Camphill flourished with Paul Bay beginning in 1949, as an

Hans Itel, TABLE SCULPTURE, Maple.



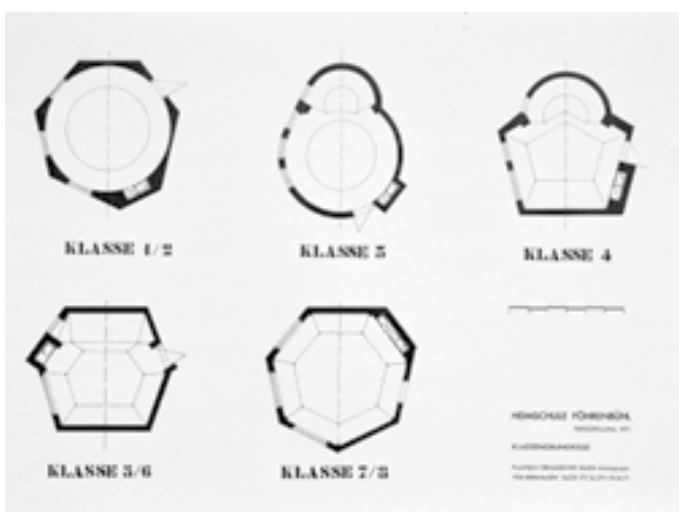


(above) MANTLE of a fireplace, study room of Karl König. Camphill House Aberdeen, Scotland. Artist unknown.

(right) WARDROBE FOR HOUSE DULDECK. Rudolf Steiner and Hermann Ranzenberger, appr. 1915-1917.



(below) SPECIAL SCHOOL FÖHRENBÜHL, floorplan of class rooms.



active artistic redesigning of existing rooms. Forms and colors influence our wellbeing significantly, especially children with special needs who are much more open to their surroundings. The new furniture was made in Camphill-owned workshops with the help of people with special needs, and this activity had a therapeutic and moral-forming function. Karl König wanted art and craft to permeate the surroundings, foster social life and create a holistic approach to a healing environment. Many pupils and coworkers of König took up these intentions. Georg von Arnim, for example, created schoolrooms in Föhrenbuehl with different floor plans according to the ages of the pupils.

Wharton Esherick, one of the most influential American woodworkers and founder of the studio furniture movement, is also featured. A name perhaps unknown to many European readers, Esherick began as a painter in the Philadelphia area at the beginning of the last century, but worked as a carver, sculptor and furniture maker the rest of his life. Wharton Esherick built his own studio in Paoli, which emerged over the years to become his home. Nearly every piece of furniture and every item in the home was designed by Esherick and most pieces were built by him as well.

Reinhold Fäth has given us a well-written, well-researched book and we are fortunate to have this resource available to us. At present, the book is only available in German, but even the reader with no German language skills will find this resource invaluable. The photographs of the work speak for themselves, as the beautiful images serve as inspiration and examples of the far-reaching examples of Steiner's inspiration and indications. 