

The Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

Artist: Herbert Bayer
Title: *Structure on Green* (1968)
Medium: silkscreen
Dimensions: 45cm x 45cm
Notes: signed: Bayer
exhibited: George Dawson's Collection, Douglas Hyde Gallery, TCD 5-27 August 1983, cata. no. 8a

b. 1900, Haag, Austria d. 1985, Santa Barbara, California

Herbert Bayer was born in Austria in 1900, and spent his early career working in architecture. From 1921 to 1923 he attended the Bauhaus in Weimar, studying mural painting (with Vasily Kandinsky) and typography; it was at this time that he created the Universal alphabet, consisting only of lower-case letters. In 1925 he returned to the Bauhaus, then in Dessau, as a teacher of advertising, layout and typography, remaining there until 1928. For the next ten years he was based in Berlin as a commercial artist: he worked as art manager of *Vogue* (1929–30) and as director of the Dorland advertising agency.

Bayer remained in Germany far later than most other progressives, and did work for the Nazi Party. In 1936 he designed a brochure for the Deutschland Ausstellung, an exhibition for tourists in Berlin during the 1936 Olympic Games - the brochure celebrated life in the Third Reich, and the authority of Hitler. Eventually though, he emigrated to the USA in 1938 where he became involved in nearly every aspect of the graphic arts. Until 1945 he worked in New York as a commercial artist, exhibition designer, painter, sculptor and maker of environments. Although Bayer considered himself primarily a painter, it was only in the early 1960s that he began to exhibit more consistently.

Throughout his career he combined geometric and organic abstract forms in an imaginatively suggestive way. In his photography he consciously sought out these geometric abstract formations in the real world, in everything from architecture to nature to contemporary design.

Towards the end of his life Bayer gave the Denver Art Museum a collection of around 8,000 of his works. He is also represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Information contained in this article is from *The Modern Art Collection Trinity College Dublin* (David Scott 1989).

This information has been compiled by Art Collections assistants, interns, and volunteers
For further information please consult www.tcd.ie/artcollections