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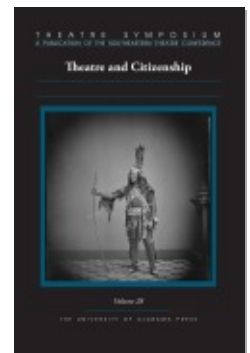
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Theatre Symposium, Volume 28, 2020, pp. 78-89 (Article)

Published by The University of Alabama Press



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# Citizenship in a Space, on a Stage, at a School, in the South

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## Xanti Schawinsky's Stage Studies at Black Mountain College

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Alex Ates

Here were students who search something [*sic*] they would not find in the glamorous universities with their impressive diplomas—Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc.—opening the doors to “success.” Instead of success, here there was the search for the truth.

—Xanti Schawinsky, “My Two Years at Black Mountain College”

### From the Bauhaus to Black Mountain

JOHN RICE'S INVITATION FOUND Alexander “Xanti” Schawinsky in Italy. It was 1936, and the newly married master teacher of Bauhaus fame was jobless and without a nest. Though the Bauhaus community had gotten considerably nimbler in their nomadism, the rising Nazi regime permanently shuttered the brutalist campuses of Germany's most famous art and design school in 1933. As a refugee-artist, Schawinsky, a Swiss Jew of Polish descent, fled to Italy and slipped into circles of the young intelligentsia who were resisting the rising fascist movement there.<sup>1</sup> With totalitarianism seemingly tailing Schawinsky wherever he fled, an invitation from a renegade American professor arrived as a well-timed opportunity. The offer? Come to America and set up shop in rural North Carolina. Mountain country.

A new experimental school was opening, Black Mountain College. Select Bauhaus teachers had claim to faculty positions. No English? No problem. World-famous Bauhaus teachers like the weaver Anni Albers and her husband, color theorist Josef Albers, had already arrived stateside and

testified to the school's legitimacy. For teaching, only a small salary could be ensured with modest housing and some square meals a day. The offer would have been insulting to an artist of Schawinsky's eminence only a few years prior, but now, with the world's order upending, Schawinsky needed only two things: space and freedom. And Black Mountain College, this new little school, had both to offer in America. As a location, the village of Black Mountain, North Carolina, revealed an unsuspected economic and social promise of the American South: land, distance, and affordability made for a vital hideout for social and political outlier artists.

At the Bauhaus, theatre was a visual method for bewitching physical space with the intervention of unconventional line, form, and mass.<sup>2</sup> The Bauhaus' theory of artistic alchemy would define Xanti Schawinsky's citizenship in America, introducing a new form of theatre pedagogy. For Schawinsky, artistic and academic truth was defined by the exploration of his new American space on stage and in exile. In this paper, the unacknowledged presence of Schawinsky's tools and innovations in the contemporary theatre will be defined and termed as "Schawinskian Space."

Because the American imagination historically distinguishes the South as a politically, socially, and artistically alien region, experimental expressions of citizenship conducted there can expand our understanding of theatre.<sup>3</sup> Such contributions are compounded when a refugee's expressions are formalized by an educational institution and multiplied through the regenerative platform of progressive pedagogy. Schawinsky was not only innovating but sharing. The theatrical innovations Xanti Schawinsky contributed at Black Mountain College are vital to acknowledge, as they reveal a blind spot in American academe. In popular discourse on citizenship and immigration, theatre in the southern United States often gets left out. I aim to provide a brief corrective to this historical oversight and contribute analysis of Schawinsky's innovations to the discourse on American performance and pedagogy. This essay acknowledges the vital significance of how a European refugee in the rural South reshaped performance and citizenship.

At the Bauhaus in Germany, Schawinsky was a jack-of-all-trades. His artistic dexterity typified the persevering spirit of the institution, particularly in its last years on the run, traveling between satellite campuses in Dessau and Berlin to avoid the Nazis' strengthening grip. Schawinsky was a living mascot of the Bauhaus. As a student, he joined the Bauhaus theatre workshop led by Oskar Schlemmer and fostered by school founder Walter Gropius (who would make his American academic debut at Harvard in the same decade).<sup>4</sup> Schawinsky was also a member of the Bauhaus Band, an experimental ragtime-Dixieland cabaret that enchanted Bauhausers with mutated instruments at weekend socials.<sup>5</sup> At the Bauhaus,

theatre and performance were engineered to deconstruct the mechanisms of pedestrian life with a machine or circus-like aesthetic that emulated the popular physical antics of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin.

The highly stylized performances of the Bauhaus, be they theatrical or musical, were derivative of the school's mission of enacting the German principle of Total Art—altering how the world's visual order is perceived and sensed.<sup>6</sup> The Bauhaus's pedagogy was pithily summarized in the de facto classroom catchphrase of Bauhaus-to-Black Mountain faculty member Josef Albers: "I will not make you artists; I will teach you to see."<sup>7</sup>

At Black Mountain College, Schawinsky conjoined the principles of aesthetic totality with an academic totality designed to alter how *knowledge* is perceived.

### The Circumstances of Black Mountain College's Founding and Schawinsky's Arrival

In 1933, when John Rice lost his job at Florida's Rollins College after refusing to take a loyalty oath to the school's president, he instigated an exodus.<sup>8</sup> Eight students and four teachers followed the Rice cult of personality out the door with wild plans to start a new, freer, school. Their unaccredited college would be run by a board of students and faculty members—no administration. This board would dedicate most of the school's funds to financial aid.<sup>9</sup> At Black Mountain, the arts would be a pedagogical tool for emphasizing continuous learning through kinesthetic projects. Pedagogue John Dewey, a champion of experiential learning, was in correspondence with Black Mountain College's cofounder Theodore Dreier and eventually joined the school's advisory board.<sup>10</sup> During a visit to the college, Dewey even served as a substitute teacher for Rice.<sup>11</sup>

The students Rice sought to charter the college needed to be as independent as they were curious; as adventurously minded as they were academically so. Rice understood the only way he could magnetize the caliber of students he desired would be to open the school with rockstar professors who could fast attract attention and legitimacy to the ramshackle school.

After Rice secured a YMCA retreat hall in the agrarian Blue Ridge Mountains thirty minutes outside of Asheville, he sent letters to some of the nation's most prestigious professors at the wealthiest and most selective institutions.<sup>12</sup> Rice was a classicist of some note and had many distinguished colleagues cataloged in his address book. Professors from Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, the University of Wyoming, the

University of Oklahoma, and the University of Chicago all got invitations to join Rice in inaugurating the school. While many professors were fascinated by Rice's experiment, they declined or delayed the offer. After all, Robert E. Lee Hall (the name of the woodsy retreat center Rice had rented from the YMCA) was not a comparable campus to the hallowed halls of elite American academe. Black Mountain, North Carolina, was no Cambridge, Massachusetts. Though certainly scenic, the new school was isolated, destitute, and Southern—something that elite professors enjoyed more from a distance at a *romantic* level than a practical one. For the academy's *crème de la crème*, Black Mountain College would be an expedition to monitor, maybe visit, but not to join.

In a pinch, and with few Americans on board besides his Rollins conspirators, Rice got creative and decided to outsource. Knowing Bauhaus teachers were in exile for having refused to take an oath to Hitler, Rice shaped a wild, transatlantic offer.<sup>13</sup> If he could get German Jewish Bauhausers to staff his school, Black Mountain College would have immediate international validity—and the refugees would have safety and space.

Initially, Black Mountain College's international influx elicited suspicion locally in the politically homogeneous Blue Ridge Mountains. Being dubbed "the red college" by European onlookers gave the school a fashionable mystique and a reality of free-range danger for anyone bound to Black Mountain College.<sup>14</sup> Federal law enforcement saw the arrival of the mysterious Bauhaus artists as a radical leftist infection, not a boon.<sup>15</sup> After a thorough (and hard-nosed) grilling by US immigration agents—which nearly provoked Schawinsky to call the whole move off—Black Mountain's newest Bauhausler arrived with his wife, Irene von Debschitz, to, as Schawinsky reflected, "live in freedom—to an extent at least."<sup>16</sup> Before arriving on American soil, Schawinsky was disturbed by the governmental inhibitors that qualify a refugee's belonging and citizenship in America with suspicion. Despite the geographic isolation of the Blue Ridge South, Washington, DC's eyes were on Black Mountain College from its founding in 1933 to its closure in 1957. Though the South offered the perception of freedom because of its ruralness, and the school offered the same perception because of its educational methods, as a Bauhausler, Schawinsky viewed the United States in totality by skeptically critiquing the limitations.

### Stage Studies at Black Mountain

Schawinsky utilized the academic mission of the new school (and its purposeful lack of structure) to devise a new form of study that built upon

the work he had done in Germany on the Bauhaus stage. Irene, a designer and origami master of note, installed a popular costume and fashion design course that supplemented her partner's vision.<sup>17</sup> Together, the couple expanded their transatlantic artistic heritage to the infant American college, where the school's contribution to performance had yet to be determined.

In addition to teaching drawing, painting, color theory, and playing in the college's ragtag chamber orchestra, Schawinsky created a Stage Studies course that he saw as the evolutionary culmination of his work at the Bauhaus. In the 1936–37 course catalog for Black Mountain College, Schawinsky distinguished the thrust of his teaching from standardized performance pedagogy: "This course is not intended as training for any particular branch of the contemporary theatre but rather as a general study of fundamental phenomena: space, form, color, light, sound, music, movement, time, etc. The studies take place on the stage for several reasons: it is by nature a place of illusion; it is well suited for representation of the sensibilities of today and for training in the recognition of conscious and visual order; and it is an excellent laboratory for the investigation and illustration of all these elements."<sup>18</sup> Stage Studies continued the Bauhaus exploration of perspective through visual categorization, but the course applied a new Schawinskian lens—a performative approach to the understanding of physical space. Schawinsky termed this experimental process "Space Play."<sup>19</sup> Inherent in the concept of play is the principle of experimentation. Because Black Mountain College gave Schawinsky the flexibility to experiment, the school became a big American test: could a refugee artist not only import a heritage of foreign performance to the South, but advance an avant-garde practice there?

In Schawinsky's Stage Studies program, Black Mountain students went through a progression that started with tutoring in basic geometric principles. Schawinsky was shocked by the degree of incompetency the students exhibited regarding the concept (he blamed this on anti-math bias in liberal American education). Students defined dimensional relationships between geometric objects to stimulate creative talents lurking in the subterranean levels of their minds.

Once students understood geometric principles and could creatively relate shapes to each other, Schawinsky guided the class through his procedure of Space Play. Using props and materials that would change a subject's height or direction, Schawinsky had the students improvise chaos on stage as Schawinsky improvised his citizenship as a refugee through the chaos of the world's stage.

As an educator, Schawinsky was adamant that neither speech nor writ-

ten words should be the only assessment of one's prismatic intellectual potential. This approach aligned with the Black Mountain style, which only used grades as a formality for transcripts.<sup>20</sup> Thus, Schawinsky proposed that, as the students released their inhibitions regarding the performance of improvised instincts, a kinesthetic and performative logic would be elicited, revealing capital-T Truth.

Space Play guided students to embrace a primitive spatial logic and create an experimental narrative with their bodies enhanced with the improvised music of Black Mountain instructor John Evarts. The next step was for students to devise a *structured* Space Play with props, masks, and lighting.

Stage Studies was fundamentally pictorial and deeply interdisciplinary. Schawinsky invited professors and experts to lecture to his Stage Studies class on abstract or humanistic subjects such as time, death, personhood, or theology. Students would then respond to the lecture with the Space Play process. In a 1973 letter to the North Carolina Museum of Art's Benjamin F. Williams, Schawinsky wrote about "form, composition in space, color, color composition, optics, sound, language, noise, music, rhythm, poetry, space-time, numbers, the dream building, architecture, building materials, and illusion. As the class was composed of members of all disciplines, opinions on the above subjects differed according to scientific, artistic or sociological and other considerations, and complex solutions had to be worked out in order to illuminate and to express on the stage theatrical deconstruction of validity."<sup>21</sup> The jewels of Space Play devising would be mined to produce community performances known to students as "Spectodrama." This form of performance was conceptually inspired by Schawinsky's academic interpretations of medieval allegories and iconography like Hans Holbein the Younger's 1538 print "The Dance of Death," or the Latin hymn "Day of Wrath" of the thirteenth century. Performances took place either in the Lee dining hall, where there was a stage, or in a campus gymnasium.<sup>22</sup>

The dramatic structure of Schawinsky's Spectodrama had a continuous flow ascending through four poetics. The first was *optics* or *seeing*—the second, *acoustics* or *hearing*. Third, the term "*building*," Schawinsky thought of as architecture or symphony. The fourth term was *illusion*, which defined a production's metaphysical aspects.<sup>23</sup>

Obsessed with the mechanics and manipulations of the human form, Schawinsky often utilized masks to remove the language of facial expression and encourage only gestural communication. His proposal for a weekly "Silent Day" on the Black Mountain campus where all were to wear neutral masks for the day's entirety was emphatically rejected when

pitched during a faculty meeting.<sup>24</sup> Schawinsky's ideas for how to interact with space were sometimes seen as too radical or conceptual even on the Black Mountain campus.

In her essay "Bauhaus Theatre at Black Mountain College," Eva Díaz highlights how at Black Mountain, the Bauhausian intentions would shift away from a model of theatre-making in a circus clown, machine-like aesthetic of sculptural brutalist costumes and instead root performance in something more historical and sociological, and thus more wholly human. Díaz notes that Schawinsky used his laboratory at Black Mountain to "push [the Bauhaus'] notions of spatial totality further."<sup>25</sup> In this assessment, there is an opportunity to emphasize two points: the totality of Schawinsky's fascination with all academic subjects and the specificity of a rural South location. As Schawinsky was innovating at Black Mountain College, regionalism was an increasingly utilized mode for artists to define national art of an American character; from the Dallas Nine to the Little Theatre Movement in the 1930s, artists were emphasizing self-reliance and independence by pushing ruralized representations of American citizenship in regional locations.<sup>26</sup> Philosophically, regionalism encouraged artists to assume the vantage of an immigrant, critically investigating authentic distinctions of the country with a tabula rasa eye. Schawinsky's lens was regional by default as Black Mountain was the foyer into the United States.

In her comprehensive book, *The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College*, Díaz emphasizes that Schawinsky was expanding the Bauhaus concept of totality into academic fields.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Stage Studies was a one-class college made of many different departments: anthropology, psychology, theology, architecture, English, music—the list is long. Thus, Spectodrama and Stage Studies were not only an artistic response to the Bauhaus theory of totality, they were an artistic response to many academic studies inspired by the Black Mountain's theory of educational totality. Schawinsky was hybridizing two school missions equally in Stage Studies—not just *recreating* Bauhaus performance, but rather *manifesting* Black Mountain College performance. The performative pedagogy Schawinsky contributed to the college's global body of students defined the refugee's citizenship in America. As former student Suzanne Noble quipped, "Everybody was a refugee from somewhere at Black Mountain College."<sup>28</sup> Noble's remark implies that even American-born students—many of whom, class records and interviews indicate, were from the North—felt disconnected to their own national identity; it was the artistic contributions of Black Mountain College that redefined their sense of citizenship in America.<sup>29</sup>



## Schawinskian Space

Díaz passes over this key emphasis: the lone American outpost of Bauhaus theatre was in the *South*. This detail matters because the American South is a region that is popularly othered as a space that squelches cutting-edge culture.<sup>30</sup> For an analysis to truly contextualize Schawinsky's work, the rural specificity of where his innovations were fostered needs to be underlined. The record needs to pay attention not only to how Schawinsky, an immigrant, was perceived as a refugee artist in America but to also assess how the region where Schawinsky innovated was perceived by the country's cultural gatekeepers at large. If the regional context is categorized as a superfluous detail, the foundational nature of immigrant innovations that were fostered in the American South go unacknowledged, allowing incomplete perceptions of the region to persist. In concert with the region-specific art movements of the time, Schawinsky contributed a new theatrical process as a mechanism for determining citizenship and belonging in unconventional space.

Because theatre is an interdisciplinary and interactive medium, Schawinsky utilized it as a tool for discovering validity, or truth, in his new American home. The theatre, Schawinsky realized, was the closest medium to the Holy Grail of Total Experience—the kinesthetic offshoot of the Bauhaus Total Art principle. Thus, we can use Schawinsky's theatre process as a rubric for defining the artist's interpretation of American space—not only his sense of belonging within it but also his contributions to it: his citizenship. This particular artist-teacher's citizenship is notable because it established the avant-garde identity for performance at Black Mountain College—which incubated the globally renowned performance methods of Merce Cunningham and John Cage at the school in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>31</sup>

The concept of American freedom, despite its political limitations, was integral to Schawinsky's innovations. As a refugee, Schawinsky evolved the Bauhaus theatrical model to explore the institution of American liberal arts pedagogy that was “traditionally unknown in Europe.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, Stage Studies, Space Play, and Spectodrama, though German-inspired, are American-born. Though in the American South, freedom is a contradictory and highly contextualized term, within the liberal Black Mountain College, the artist-in-exile was given pedagogical, artistic, and logistical liberty to blend mediums and innovate his learnings and lessons from Germany.

Stage Studies, Space Play, and Spectodrama can all be grouped under the term “Schawinskian Space,” which is categorized by Schawinsky's

pedagogical intentions and artistic poetics. Schawinskian Space is physical space functionalized for *total experience* through a visual intervention that interdisciplinarily coordinates with sound, shape, and liberal arts academic theory or cultural iconography in the venue of immersive theatrical presentation through unconventional narrative expressions.

Entangled in the aesthetics is a refugee's aim of uncovering total truth in the exploration of human form in the frame of American space and academic rebellion. The style was catapulted by this space that made itself most *easily available* at the time when its presence was most critical. Because the Great Depression (and the school's unstable endowment) limited access to traditional art-making supplies and materials, Bauhaus artists utilized the Blue Ridge ecosystem to instruct and make art. "We use materials to satisfy our practical needs and our spiritual ones as well," Anni Albers wrote in a 1938 college newsletter. "We have useful things and beautiful things—equipment and works of art."<sup>33</sup> The Black Mountain aesthetic was literally made of Southern land. When compared with metropolitan culture hubs, the commonsensical agrarian style of art-making embraced a Southern aesthetic of social contrarianism. This dynamic was epitomized when Schawinsky once invited mountain villagers and farmers to wear neutral masks and robes (becoming "a unified wall of individuals without identity") to watch the Spectodrama *Danse Macabre* in the candlelit round.<sup>34</sup> Schawinsky's presence as a refugee typified a sociopolitical dissonance in a space that culturally validated rebellions of citizenship as part of its "regional consciousness and special history," as historian Sheldon Hackney phrased it.<sup>35</sup> This "special history" distinguishes the South from other regions in the United States. Despite the school's pedagogical uniqueness, Black Mountain College is inseparable from, and distinguished by, Black Mountain, North Carolina. The location defined the school because it had the land accessible to host Black Mountain College, absorb its growth, feed its students, and provoke its artists. Black Mountain College is part of the South's "special history." Thus, Schawinskian Space is not simply American—it's *Southern* American.

### Schawinsky's Impact and Legacy

Schawinsky didn't stay long at Black Mountain—few did. As most participants in progressive ventures eventually discover, truly utopian institutions are a fiction, and utopianistic egos have a toxic way of polluting academic tranquility. Additionally, Schawinsky's auteur demeanor, coupled with his habit of angrily throwing ashtrays at students out of frustration, did not make him the most revered professor on campus.<sup>36</sup> After Rice

was ousted in scandal and Schawinsky was denied a bonus to his satisfaction, the Bauhaus master left North Carolina for America's cosmopolitan artistic epicenters to install Stage Studies-like curricula in other schools and seek exhibitions in contemporary art museums.<sup>37</sup>

For the time he was at Black Mountain, Schawinsky's relationship to Southern space defined his citizenship in America. In search of academic and artistic veritas, he formulated a distinct definition of belonging in new space by creating Schawinskian Space through Stage Studies, Space Play, and Spectodrama.

Schawinsky's work was not only an evolution of the Bauhaus style but also the flag-planting of a new theatre in a new land and the launch of a non-narrative visual performance style that affected the Black Mountain approach for the remainder of the school's existence. Xanti Schawinsky's performative canon in America signifies an extraordinary cultural interchange between a refugee and a region where innovative contributions are too often diminished.

## Notes

1. Curiously, despite later reflecting on the fear of Mussolini's rise in a 1973 letter, Schawinsky was commissioned while in Italy to design propaganda for the tyrant that appeared in the magazine *Il Rivista Illustrata del Popolo* in April 1934.

2. I have utilized the word "bewitching" because it adopts a term used by Schlemmer at the Bauhaus to describe the stage as "space bewitched." Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, Farkas Molnár, Walter Gropius, and Arthur S. Wensinger, *The Theater Bauhaus* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961).

3. Shawn Chandler Bingham, "Bohemian Groves in Southern Soil," *The Bohemian South: Creating Countercultures from Poe to Punk* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

4. "Xanti Schawinsky," Bauhaus 100, [www.bauhaus100.com/the-bauhaus/people/masters-and-teachers/xanti-schawinsky/](http://www.bauhaus100.com/the-bauhaus/people/masters-and-teachers/xanti-schawinsky/), accessed July 16, 2019.

5. Xanti Schawinsky, "From the Bauhaus to Black Mountain," *Tulane Drama Review* 15, no. 3 (1971): 31.

6. Richard Wagner, "Outlines of the Artwork of the Future" (1850, in German; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993). Wagner redefined K. F. E. Trahndorff's theory of a "total work of art" in 1849.

7. Anne Chapin Weston, interview by Mary E. Harris, 1971, North Carolina Western Regional Archives.

8. Mary Seymour, "Ghosts of Rollins (and Other Skeletons in the Closet)," *Rollins Magazine*, Fall 2011.

9. Emile Willmetz and Suzanne Noble, interview by Mary E. Harris, 1971, North Carolina Western Regional Archives.

10. Jonathan Fisher, "The Life and Work of an Institution of Progressive

Higher Education: Towards a History of Black Mountain College, 1933–1949,” *Journal of Black Mountain Studies*, vol. 6 (2013).

11. Weston interview.
12. Elvin Hatch, “Delivering the Goods: Cash, Subsistence Farms, and Identity in a Blue Ridge County in the 1930s,” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2003): 6–48.
13. Nicholas Fox Weber, *The Bauhaus Group; Six Masters of Modernism* (New York: Random House, 2009), 481.
14. Schawinsky, “My Two Years.”
15. Jon Elliston, “FBI Investigation of Black Mountain College Revealed in Newly Released File,” *Carolina Public Press*, August 5, 2015, <https://carolinapublicpress.org/23088/fbi-investigation-of-black-mountain-college-revealed-in-newly-released-file/>.
16. Schawinsky had an impression of America gleaned through movies and media. From the letter “My Two Years at Black Mountain College”: “the grilling [by US immigration agents] has been such that I almost decided to say: ‘keep your America for yourself, who wants to go there and get murdered on a fire escape ladder like in your movies, or to live in misery as depicted in them!’”
17. Irene Schawinsky grew up with an artistically supportive family. Her mother, Wanda von Debschitz-Kunowski, was a German portrait photographer of note. Beate Ziegert, “The Debschitz School, Munich: 1902–1914,” *Design Issues* 3, no. 1 (1986): 28–42.
18. Black Mountain College, *1936–1937 Course Catalog* (np, nd), North Carolina Western Regional Archives.
19. Schawinsky, “My Two Years,” 4.
20. Roderick Louis Mulholland, interview by Mary E. Harris, 1971, North Carolina Western Regional Archives.
21. Schawinsky, “My Two Years,” 4.
22. Schawinsky, “My Two Years,” 7.
23. Schawinsky, “My Two Years,” 5.
24. Schawinsky, “My Two Years,” 5.
25. Eva Díaz, “Bauhaus Theater at Black Mountain College,” *Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst: Xanti Schawinsky*, exhibition catalogue (Zurich, JPRIRingier 2015), 57–65.
26. “Lone Star Regionalism: The Dallas Nine and Their Circle, 1928–1945,” Dallas Museum of Art, [https://files.dma.org/multimedia/document/145321711007971\\_original.pdf](https://files.dma.org/multimedia/document/145321711007971_original.pdf); Dorothy Chansky, “Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience” (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004); Elizabeth Osborne, “Staging the People: Community and Identity in the Federal Theatre Project” (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2011).
27. Eva Díaz, *The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
28. Willmetz and Noble interview.
29. Don Page, interview by Mary E. Harris, 1970, North Carolina Western Regional Archives.

30. Jon H. Carter, "A Community Far Afield: Black Mountain College and the Southern Estrangement of the Avant-Garde," in *The Bohemian South: Creating Countercultures, from Poe to Punk*, edited by Shawn Chandler Bingham and Lindsey E. Freeman (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 55–69.
31. Arabella Stranger, "Merce Cunningham's Ensemble Space," *Journal of Black Mountain Studies* 3 (2011).
32. Schawinsky, "My Two Years," 2.
33. Anni Albers, "Work with Material," *Black Mountain College Bulletin* 5 (Black Mountain, 1938).
34. The faulty rural electricity infrastructure resulted in sporadic electrical stage lighting. Schawinsky, "My Two Years," 8.
35. Sheldon Hackney, "The Contradictory South," *Southern Cultures* 7, no. 4 (2001): 68.
36. Don Page interview.
37. Xanti Schawinsky to Board of Fellows, The Corporation of Black Mountain College, April 12, 1938, North Carolina Western Regional Archives.

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