

WHEN, IN WEIMAR, THE LAST TWO STUDENTS REMAIN, PREPARING TO LEAVE THE LIBRARY, AND, IN DESSAU, THE GUIDED TOURS ARE OVER...



... I COME BACK TO MYSELF. A THING AMONG THINGS.

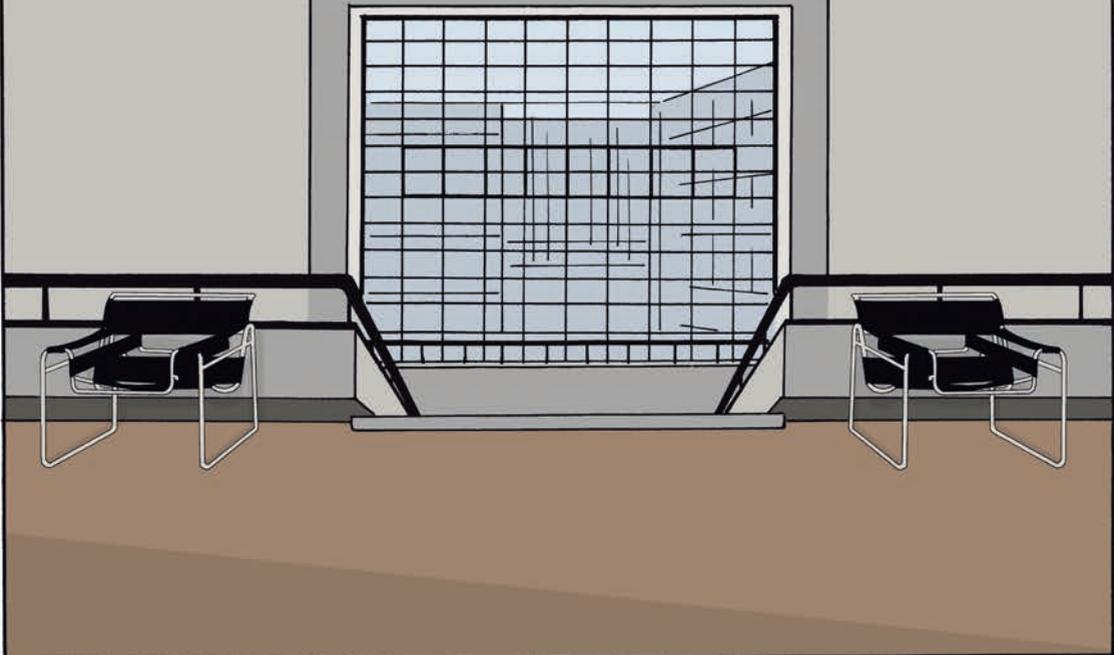


IT IS THE TIME OF DAY DURING WHICH I WELCOME ON MY WALLS A SLANTED LIGHT...



... IN EMPTY ROOMS THE DUST MOTHS DANCE THROUGH THE AIR, INSIDE THE SHAFTS OF LIGHT...

... AND THE SILENCE
BECOMES A REFUGE FOR
MEMORIES.

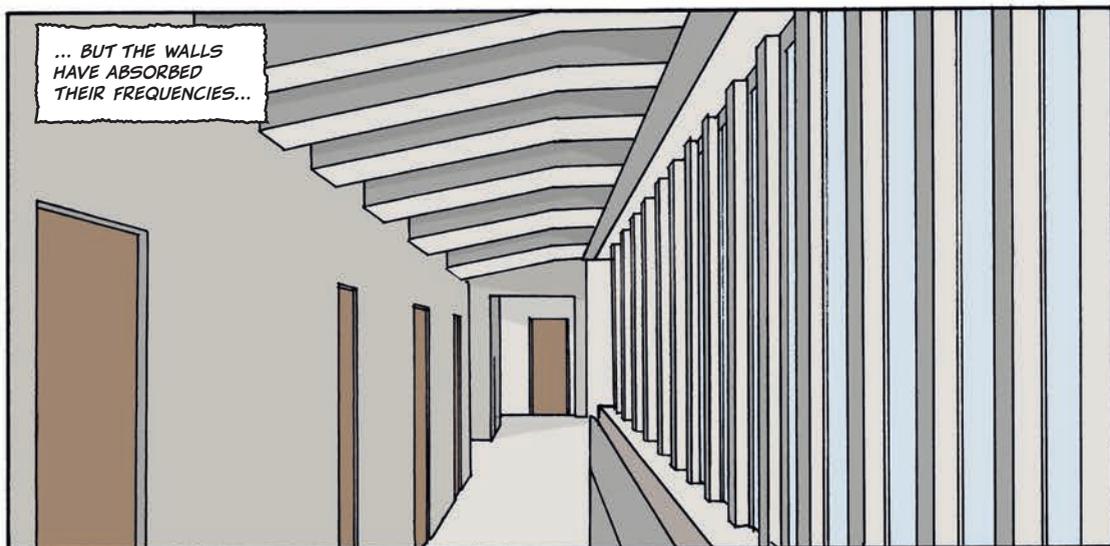


IN THE BEAUTY AND THE
PAIN OF HAVING BEEN AND
NOW NO LONGER BEING.





YOU, YOU CANNOT HEAR THEM, THOSE VOICES, STILL SO ALIVE, THAT HAVE TRAVERSED ME...



... BUT THE WALLS HAVE ABSORBED THEIR FREQUENCIES...



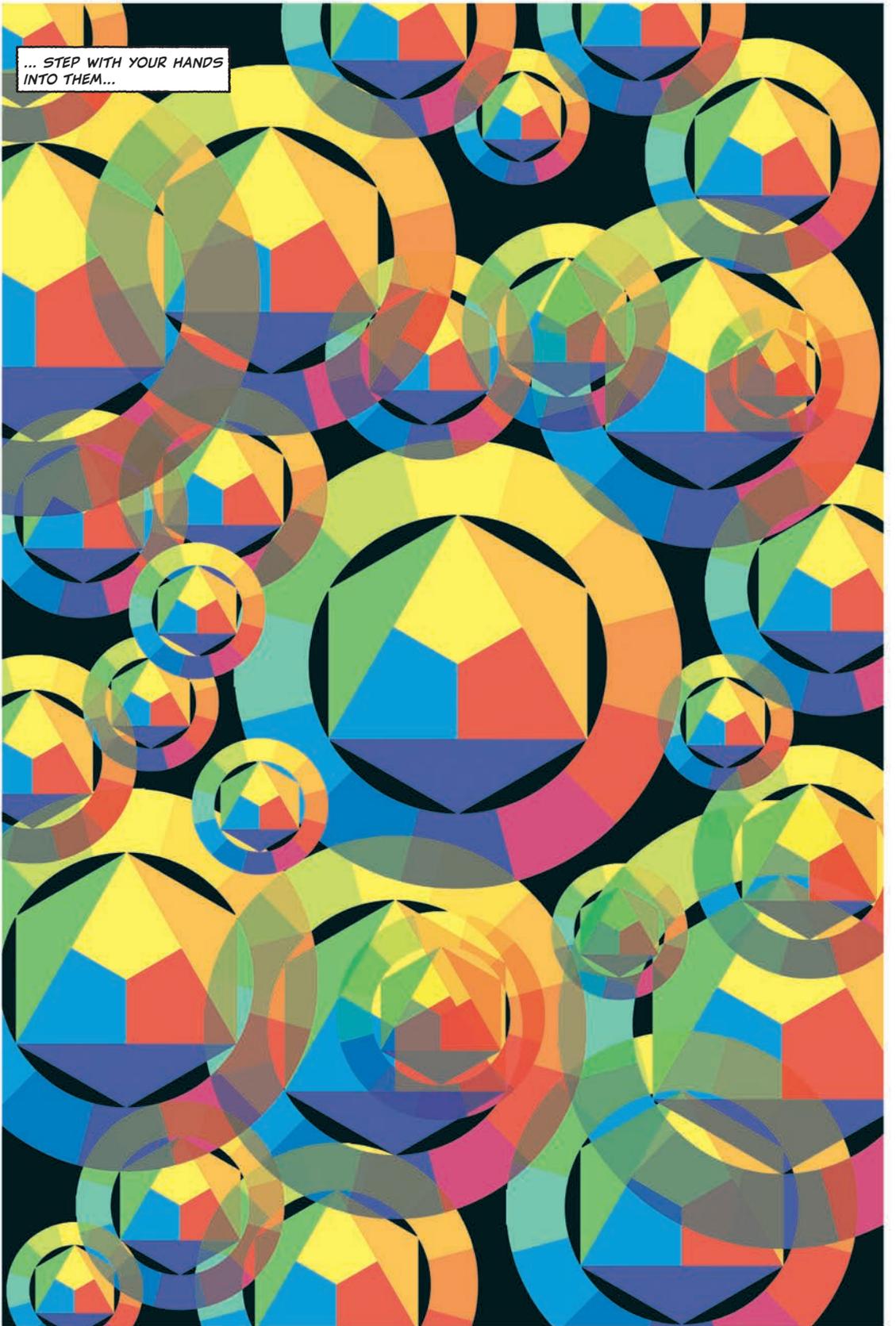
LIKE THE WORDS OF THE FIRST LESSON... CLOSE YOUR EYES...

WEIMAR 1919-1925

CLOSE YOUR EYES.

*CONCENTRATE AND IMAGINE A
COLORED SPHERE...*

... STEP WITH YOUR HANDS
INTO THEM...





... FEEL... EXPLORE... WHEN SEEKING
NEW FORMS, WE MUST ALLOW THESE
TO BE REBORN IN US...

... FIRST IRRATIONAL AND THEN
INCREASINGLY RATIONAL.



I WAS BORN IN 1919,
AT THE END OF THE
GREAT WAR, AT THE END
OF THE SECOND REICH.
BUT WHERE OTHERS
SAW AN ENDING, I SAW
A BEGINNING...

... WALTER GROPIUS.



THE REPUBLIC WAS BORN IN WEIMAR, AND SO, A SCHOOL, WAS I. EMBEDDED IN THE TURBULENCE OF CHANGE WAS THE CREATIVE ENERGY OF HUMAN BEINGS...

... AND THE AMBITION TO ADOPT A NEW GAZE, LEAVING DIFFERENCES ASIDE TO LOOK FOR A CLOSE CONNECTION AMONG PEOPLE IN COLLECTIVE WORK.

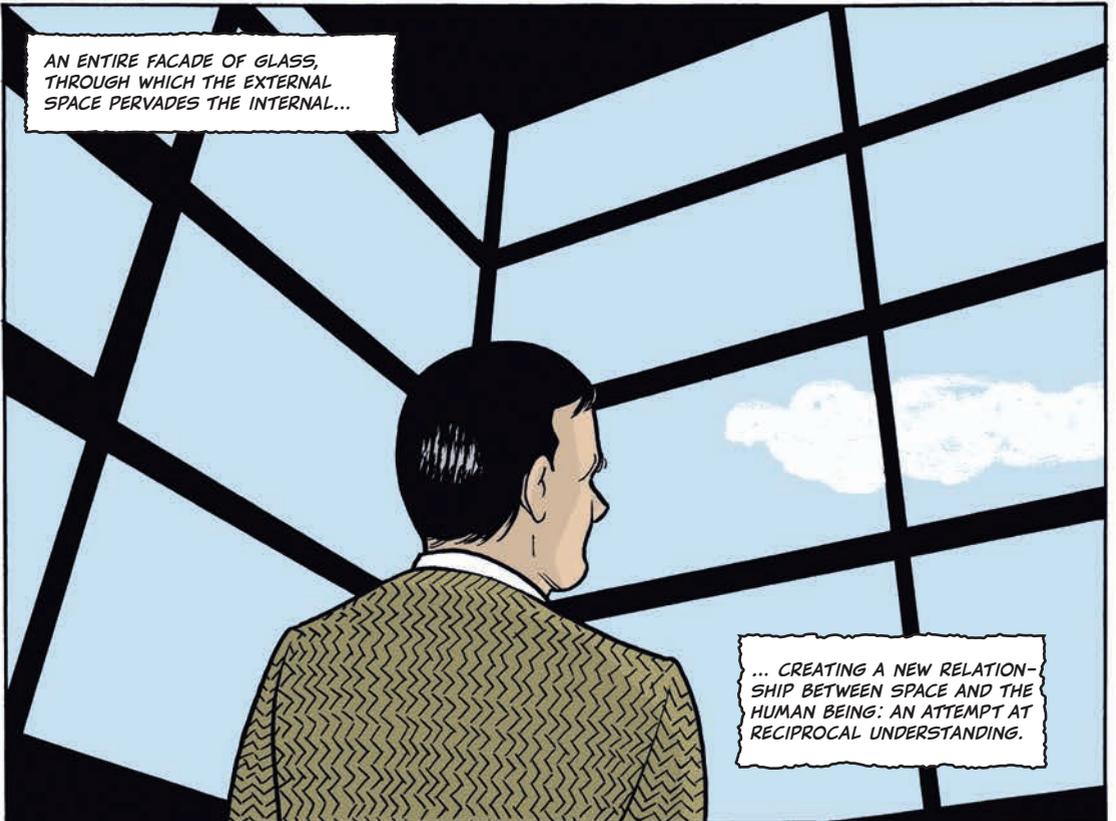
A SCHOOL WHERE THE ARTS MERGE INTO ONE, WITHOUT COMPARTMENTALIZATIONS OR DIVISIONS, TO SEE THE WORLD WITHOUT MENTAL LIMITATIONS.

IF THERE WERE A NEED FOR A HOUSE AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE, TO BE BUILT AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE... WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE?

WALTER WAS CONSIDERED AN EXCEPTIONAL ARCHITECT. IN 1911 HE HAD DESIGNED A NEW PLANT FOR THE FAGUS COMPANY, A SHOE MANUFACTURER.



AN ENTIRE FACADE OF GLASS, THROUGH WHICH THE EXTERNAL SPACE PERVADES THE INTERNAL...



... CREATING A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPACE AND THE HUMAN BEING: AN ATTEMPT AT RECIPROCAL UNDERSTANDING.

1915, MAUSSON

THE IDEA FOR THE SCHOOL HAD BEEN BORN SEVERAL YEARS EARLIER, DURING A NIGHT ON THE WESTERN FRONT...

A SCHOOL BASED ON THE MODEL OF THE MEDIEVAL «BAUHÜTTE»...

THE LODGES OF THE CATHEDRAL BUILDERS, WHERE THE THEORETICAL ARTS WERE COUPLED WITH THEIR PRACTICAL APPLICATION: ARTISANS AND ARCHITECTS, SCULPTORS AND WORKMEN...

BOOM!

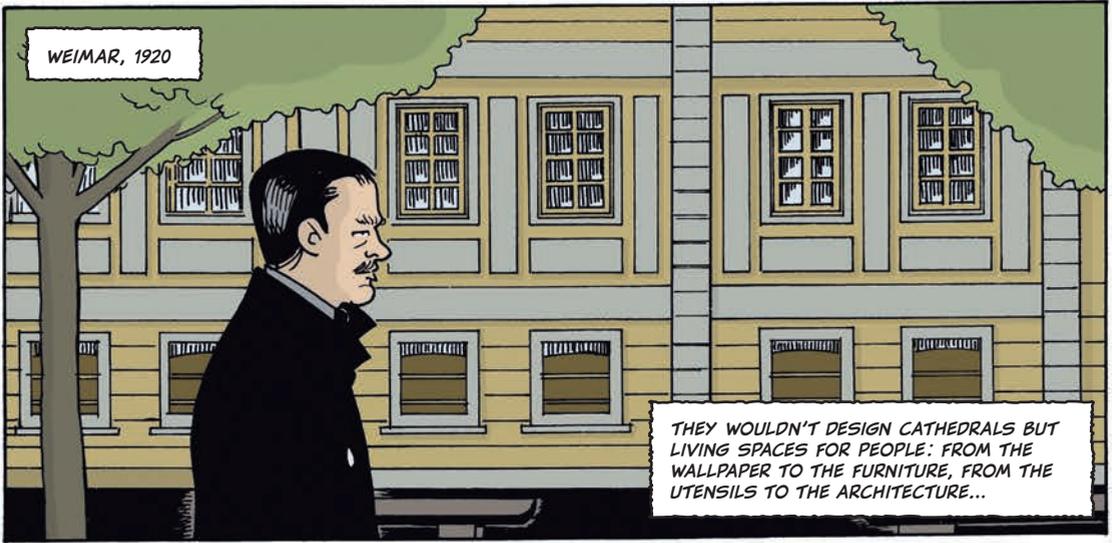
BOOM!

... NAMELESS PEOPLE UNITED BY A COMMON PURPOSE MORE ELEVATED THAN JUST FAME...

... THE BUILDING OF CATHEDRALS THAT WOULD RESIST TIME AND REPRESENT THE BEST EXPRESSION OF HUMANKIND.

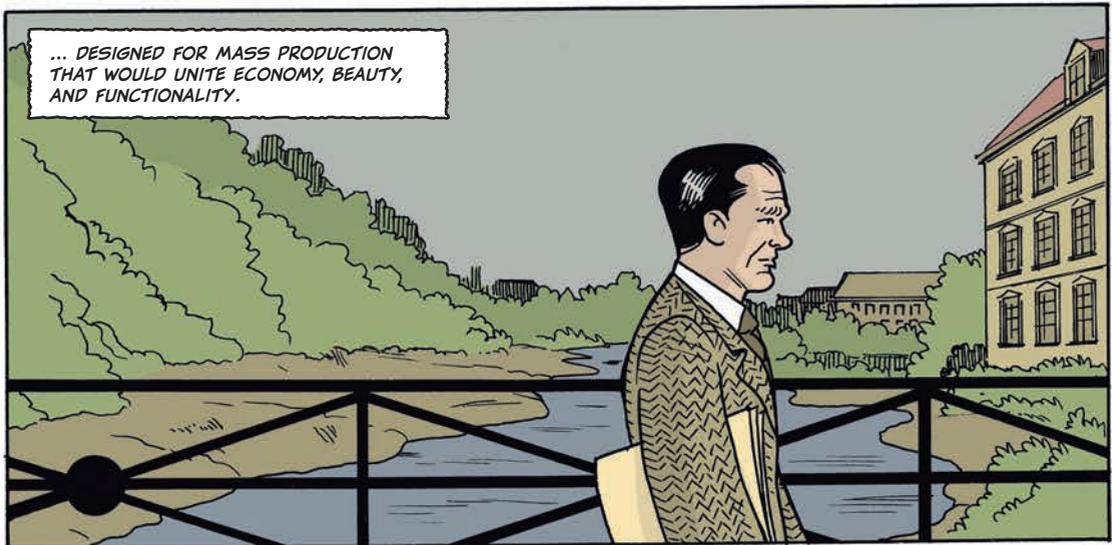


LIKE THE CATHEDRAL WALTER HAD ADMIRERD MONTHS EARLIER IN VIENNA.



WEIMAR, 1920

THEY WOULDN'T DESIGN CATHEDRALS BUT LIVING SPACES FOR PEOPLE: FROM THE WALLPAPER TO THE FURNITURE, FROM THE UTENSILS TO THE ARCHITECTURE...



... DESIGNED FOR MASS PRODUCTION THAT WOULD UNITE ECONOMY, BEAUTY, AND FUNCTIONALITY.



WEIMAR, 1922

WALTER WANTED A SCHOOL THAT WAS OPEN TO CHANGE. STARTING WITH ENROLLMENT: WOMEN WOULD ALSO BE ADMITTED.

STAATLICHES

I EXPERIENCED THOSE EARLY YEARS AS A GAME, A DISCOVERY, A GAMBLE...

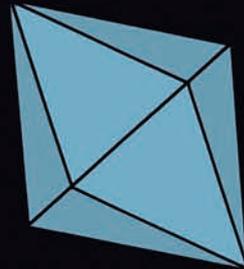




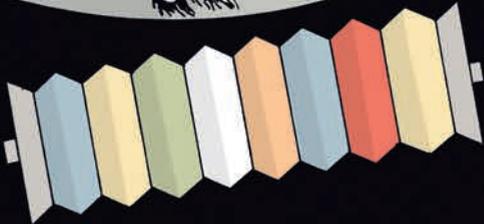
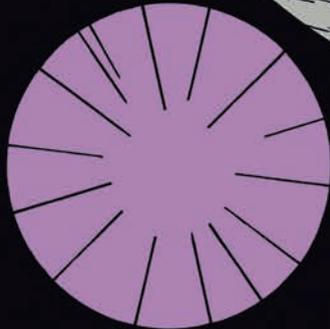
... WITH THE PASSION OF YOUNG VOICES THAT FILLED ALL OF MY ROOMS.

BAUHAUS

I ESPECIALLY LOVED THE PARTIES...



... WALTER WOULD HAVE LIKED FOR THE ENTIRE CITY OF WEIMAR TO COME...

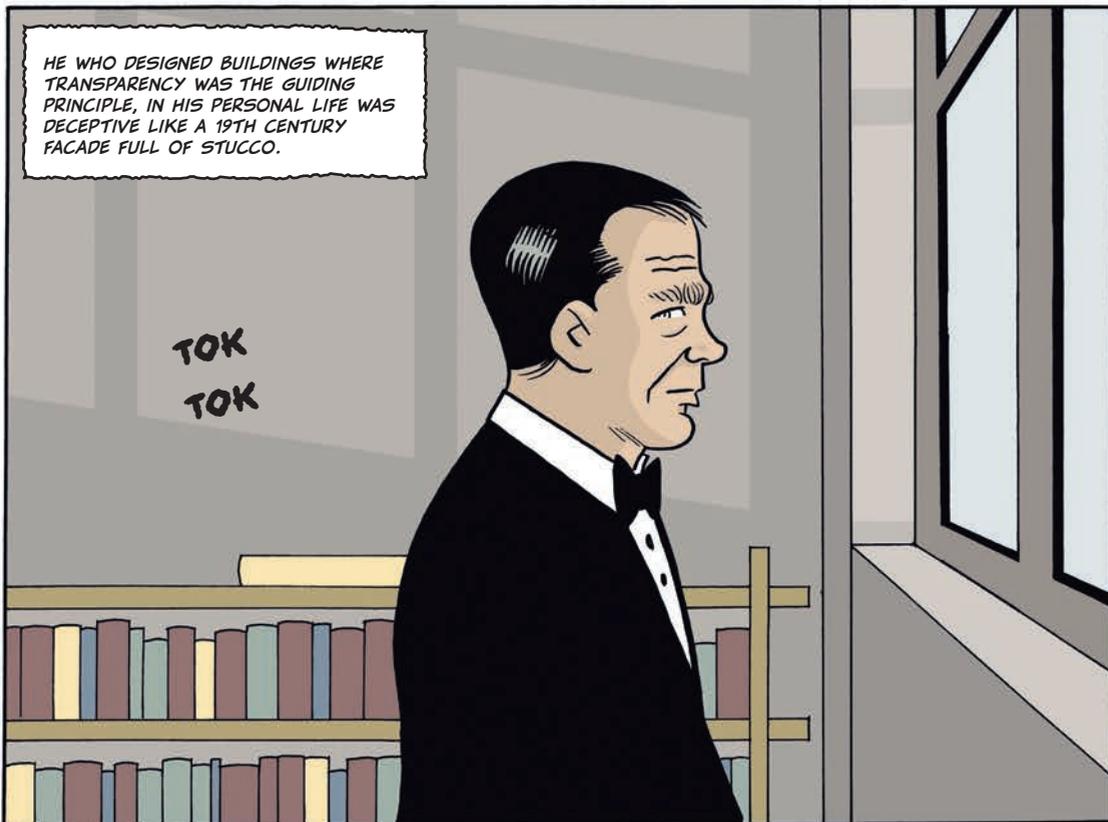


WHEN WALTER REMAINED ALONE, HAPPINESS VANISHED, GIVING WAY TO SORROW. HIS MARRIAGE WITH ALMA MAHLER WAS FAILING AND HE KEPT IT HIDDEN FROM EVERYONE, EXCEPT FROM HIS MISTRESS.



HE WHO DESIGNED BUILDINGS WHERE TRANSPARENCY WAS THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE, IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE WAS DECEPTIVE LIKE A 19TH CENTURY FACADE FULL OF STUCCO.

TOK
TOK





IT'S ME, AM I INTERRUPTING YOU?

I HOPED YOU'D COME BY.

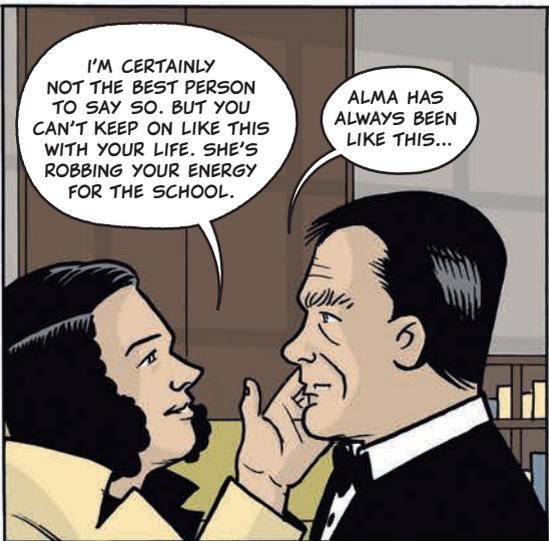


THIS WEEKEND WILL YOU STAY AT MY PLACE?

I CAN'T. I TOLD HANS I WOULD COME BACK HOME. WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO GO TO VIENNA TO SEE ALMA?

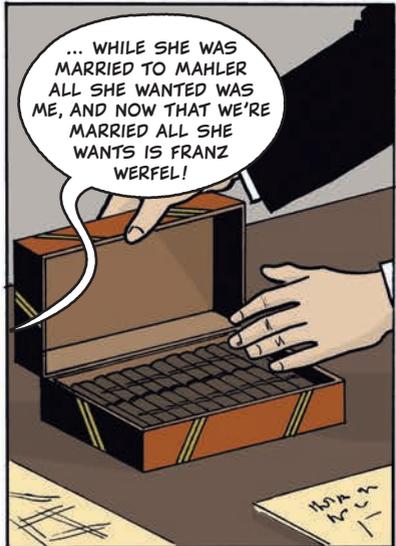


SHE CHANGED HER MIND...



I'M CERTAINLY NOT THE BEST PERSON TO SAY SO. BUT YOU CAN'T KEEP ON LIKE THIS WITH YOUR LIFE. SHE'S ROBBING YOUR ENERGY FOR THE SCHOOL.

ALMA HAS ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS...

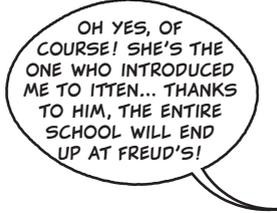
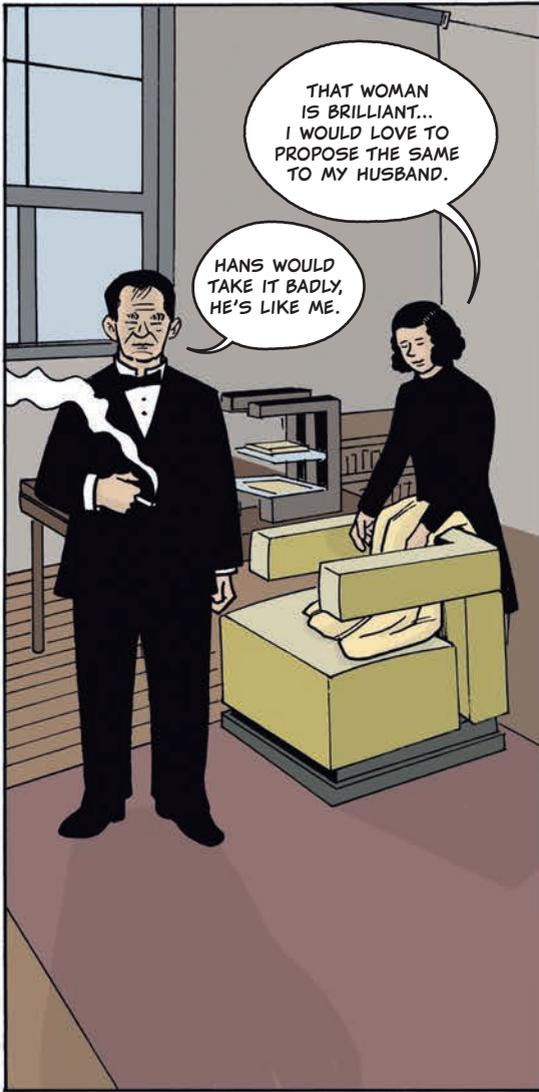


... WHILE SHE WAS MARRIED TO MAHLER ALL SHE WANTED WAS ME, AND NOW THAT WE'RE MARRIED ALL SHE WANTS IS FRANZ WERFEL!



BUT HOW DID SHE REACT TO YOUR SUGGESTION TO SEPARATE?

OH, THAT... SHE DOESN'T WANT TO, SHE PROPOSED THAT I SHARE HER WITH WERFEL: SIX MONTHS WITH HIM AND SIX MONTHS WITH ME! SHE SAYS THAT HE HAS ALREADY ACCEPTED!



THE PAINTER JOHANNES ITTEN TAUGHT IN THE PRELIMINARY COURSE, THE SO-CALLED VORKURS, WHERE STUDENTS EXPERIMENTED WITH COLORS, TEXTURES, AND FORMS BY UTILIZING MATERIALS LIKE GLASS, TEXTILES, PAPER, AND CLAY.

I LIKED HIS CLASSES, THEY HAD A PLAYFUL ASPECT, AND HIS METHODS TRANSFORMED THEM INTO AN ASCETIC EXPERIENCE.

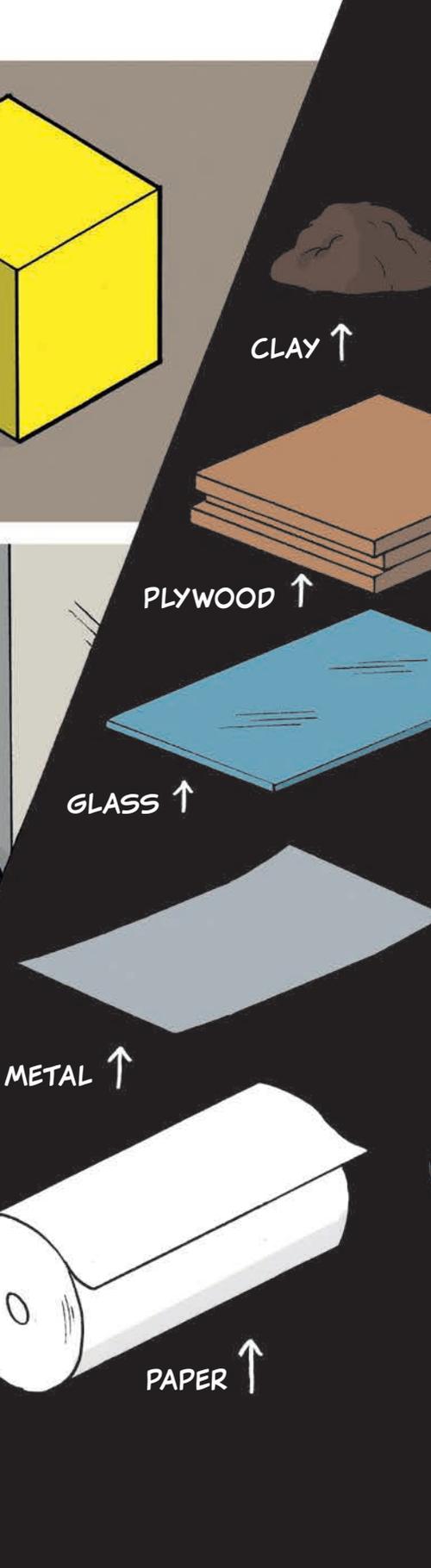
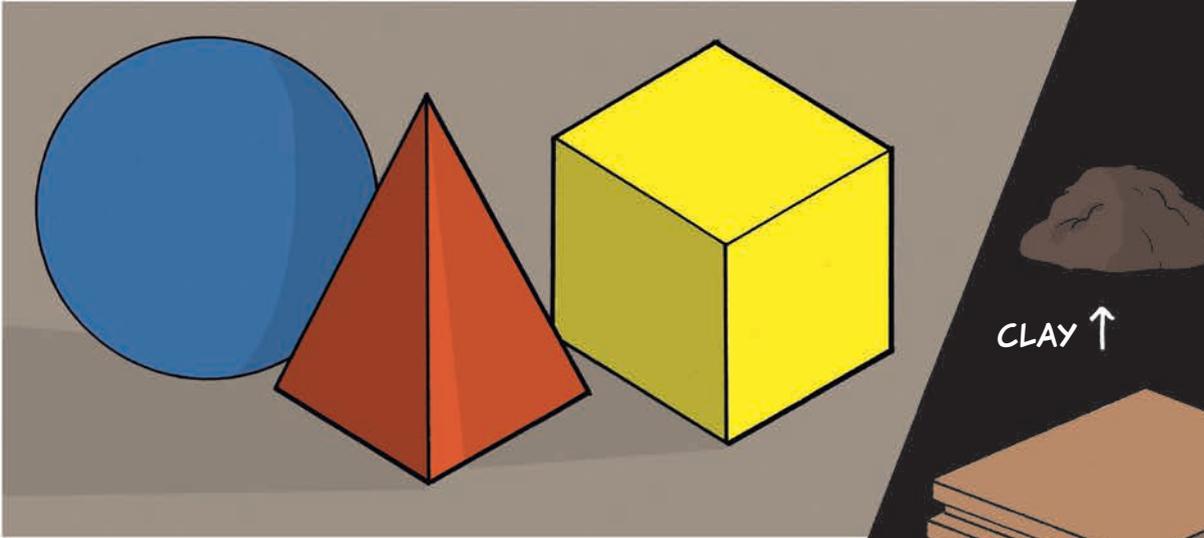
THEY SAY THAT EACH OF US INHABITS HIS OR HER OWN SELF, BUT IN EACH PHASE OF LIFE WE CHOOSE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS TO GIVE FORM TO WHAT WE ARE.



HE HAD BEEN A FOLLOWER OF MAZDAZAN, A PHILOSOPHY THAT SEES THE WORLD AS DIVIDED BETWEEN TWO SPIRITS, ONE MALIGNANT AND ONE BENIGN, THAT ARE PERPETUALLY IN CONFLICT...

... HE ADHERED TO A STRICT DISCIPLINE: HE SHAVED HIS HEAD, WAS A VEGETARIAN, WORE MINIMALIST CLOTHING RESEMBLING A MONK'S ROBE, AND RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS ENGAGE IN STRANGE METHODS OF PURIFICATION...

... HIS ARTISTIC VISION FOUND INCREASING CONSENSUS, AND MY CLASSROOMS WERE FULL OF AMAZEMENT.





BUT WHERE DO MATERIALS COME FROM? DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT EACH TEAPOT DOESN'T CARRY WITHIN IT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE WOODS FROM WHICH THE CLAY WAS EXTRACTED?



SAND ↑



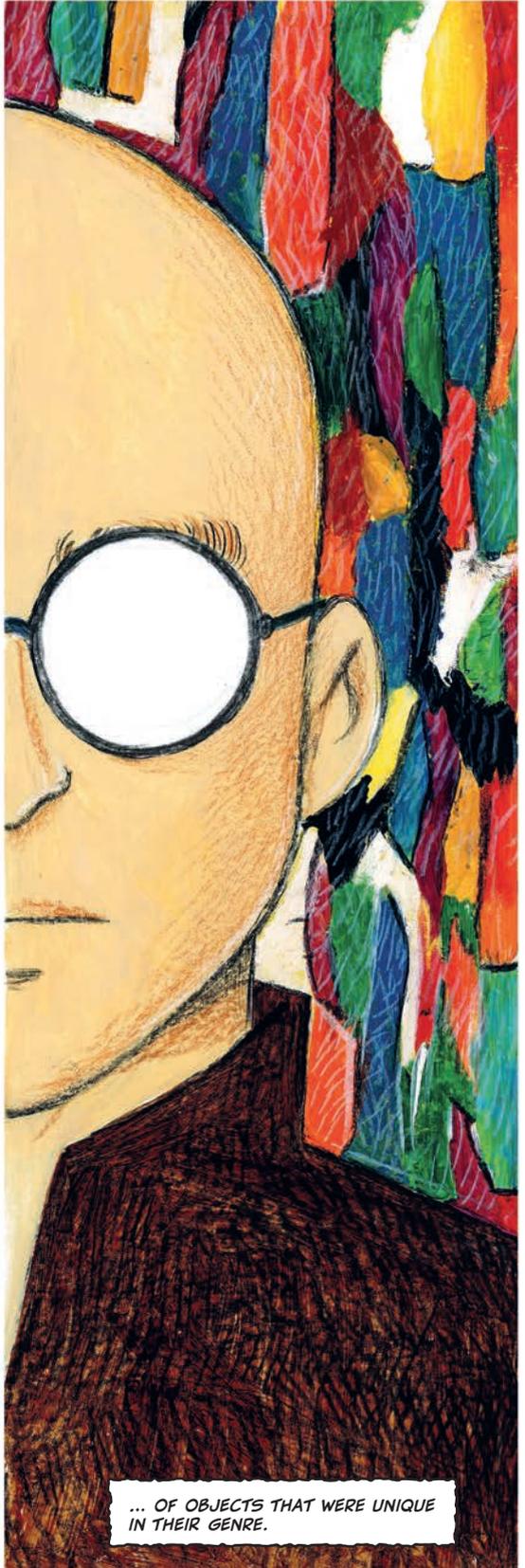
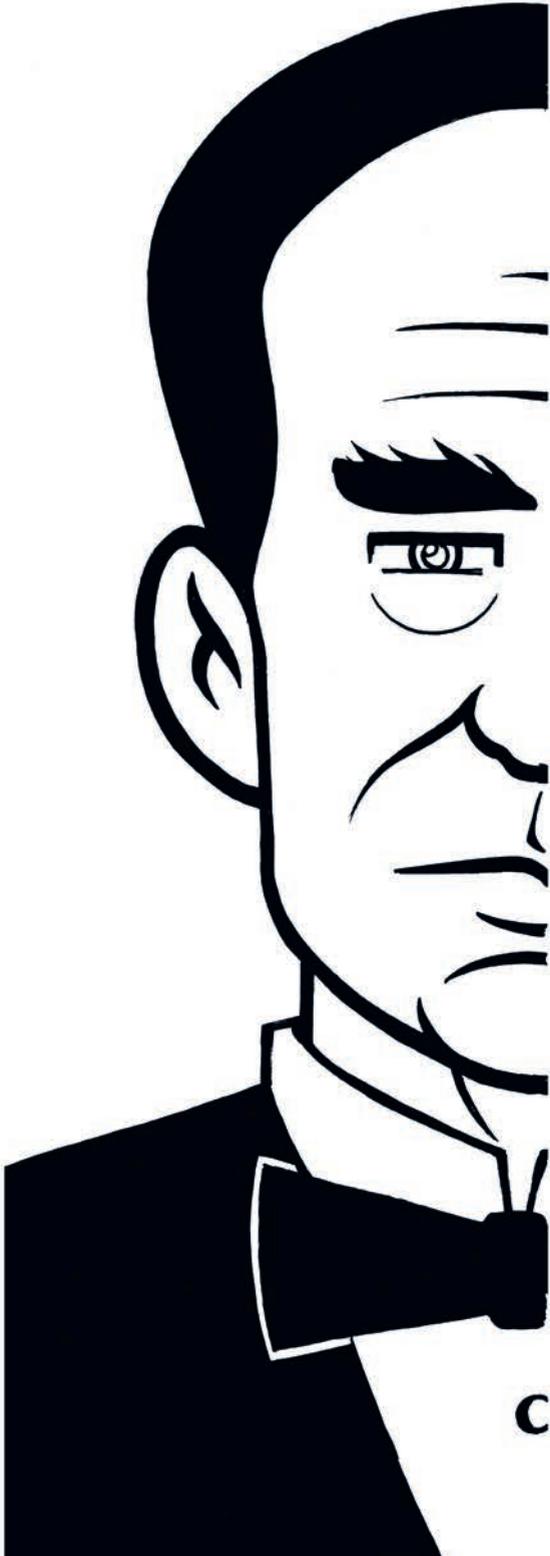
WOOL ↑

WHAT IF ALUMINUM WERE NOTHING BUT LIGHT? IN ITS LIGHTNESS IT INDICATES TO US A WAY OF BEING IN THE WORLD.

RUBBER ↑

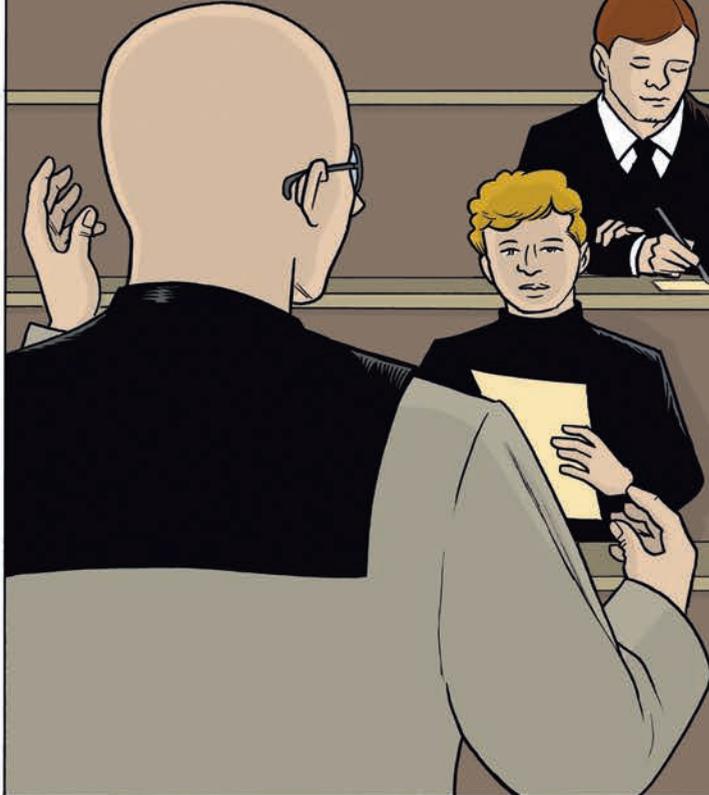


BUT ITTEN'S IDEAS CONFLICTED WITH THOSE OF WALTER: THE ONE PREACHED THE CREATION OF UNIQUE WORKS OF ART, WHILE THE OTHER WANTED MASS PRODUCTION...



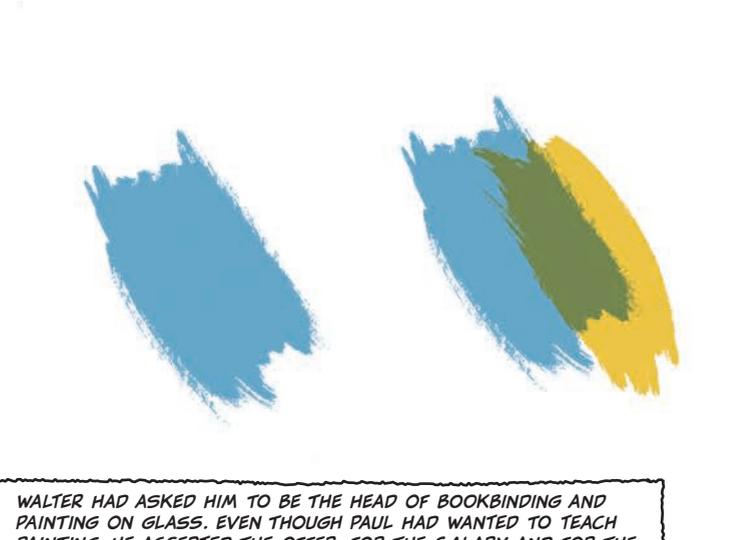
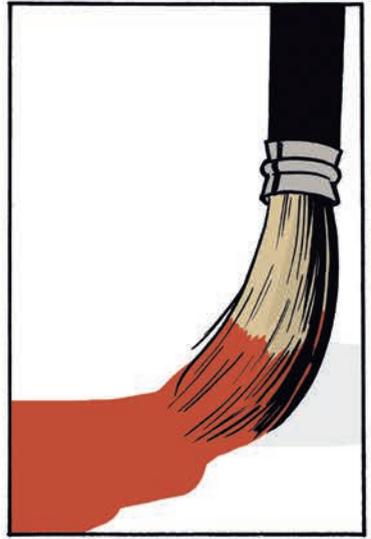
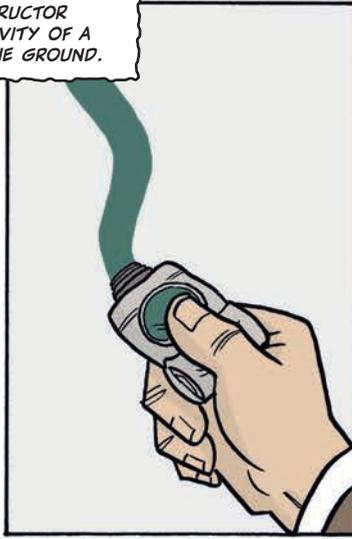
... OF OBJECTS THAT WERE UNIQUE IN THEIR GENRE.

BUT SOME WERE TIRED OF ITTEN
FOR A DIFFERENT REASON...

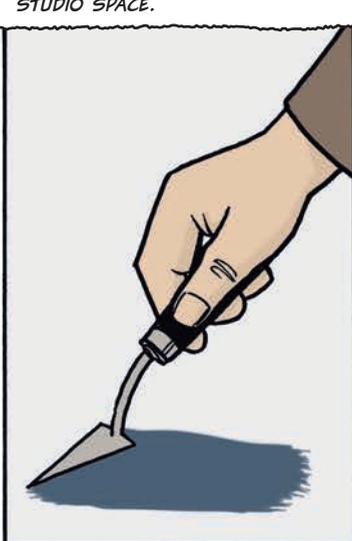
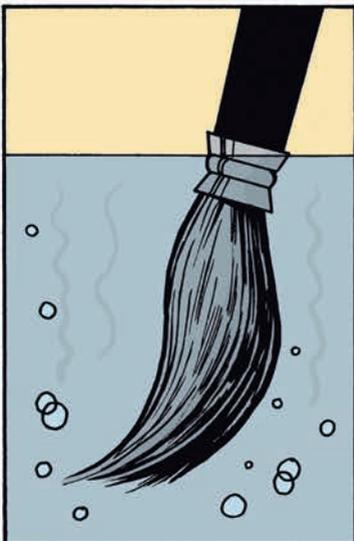


... WAS HE A TEACHER OR A
SPIRITUAL GUIDE?

THE PAINTER PAUL KLEE WAS THE INSTRUCTOR I LIKED BEST: HE TAUGHT WITH THE LEVITY OF A PIECE OF PAPER FLOATING DOWN TO THE GROUND.



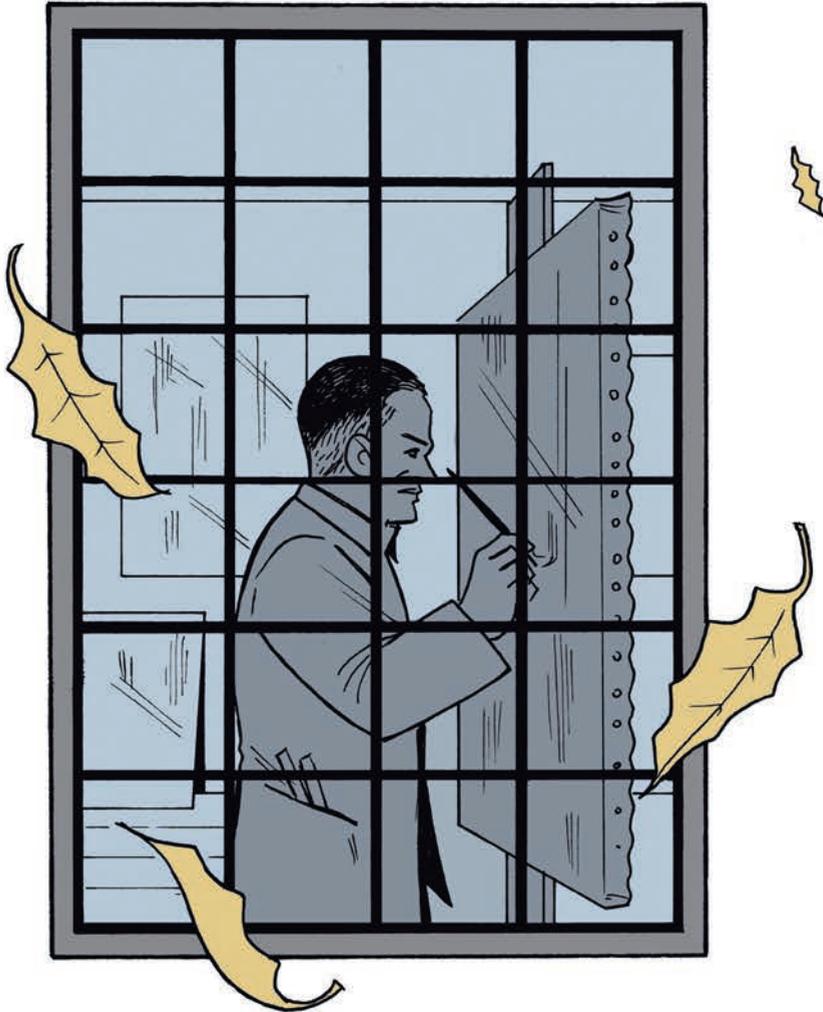
WALTER HAD ASKED HIM TO BE THE HEAD OF BOOKBINDING AND PAINTING ON GLASS. EVEN THOUGH PAUL HAD WANTED TO TEACH PAINTING, HE ACCEPTED THE OFFER, FOR THE SALARY AND FOR THE STUDIO SPACE.



PAUL TOLD HIS STUDENTS THAT ART IS NOT THE REPRODUCTION OF THAT WHICH WE SEE, BUT THE REVEALING OF THAT WHICH IS INVISIBLE.



EVERY FORM, STRIPPED OF THE SUPERFLUOUS,
REVEALS A TRUTH THAT IS UNIVERSAL...

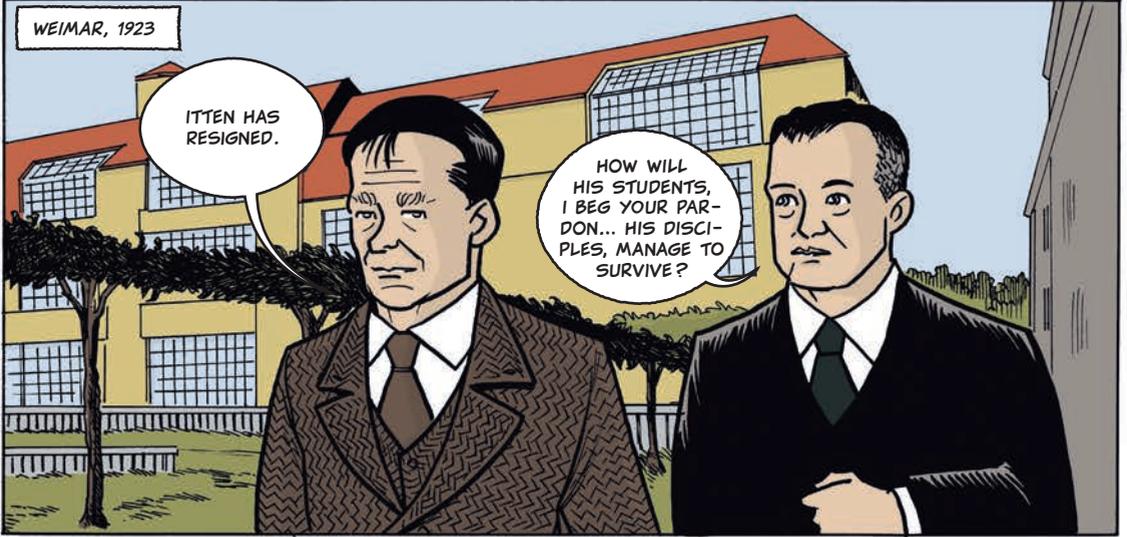


... LIKE THE DRAWING OF A CHILD, WHO CAPTURES THE ESSENCE OF A
TREE IN JUST A FEW LINES.

WEIMAR, 1923

ITTEN HAS RESIGNED.

HOW WILL HIS STUDENTS, I BEG YOUR PARDON... HIS DISCIPLES, MANAGE TO SURVIVE?



SOME WILL FOLLOW HIM TO VIENNA, THE SAME AS WITH VAN DOESBURG.

THAT WAS A REAL SHAME. THEO VAN DOESBURG CREATED AN ARTISTIC MOVEMENT THAT WAS GREATLY RESPECTED. A NEW WORLD-VIEW...



THEO'S DE STIJL IS ALL RATIONALITY AND ELEGANCE. HE HAS NONE OF THE MYSTICAL QUAGMIRE OF ITTEN.



I DON'T TALK ABOUT STYLES, BUT ABOUT PEOPLE. ITTEN WAS A MANIPULATOR, BUT THEO? WASN'T HE ARROGANT?





DIDN'T HE IMPOSE A SINGLE VIEW OF ART?

THE 19TH CENTURY HAS BEEN OVER FOR SOME TIME NOW...



BUT HOW DID HE GET INTO THE BAUHAUS?



A GRAB BAG OF IDEAS... THAT ARE OF NO USE TO ANYONE.



GET RID OF ALL THE OBLIQUE LINES, PLEASE.



JUST CHANGE IT ALL TO STRAIGHT LINES.

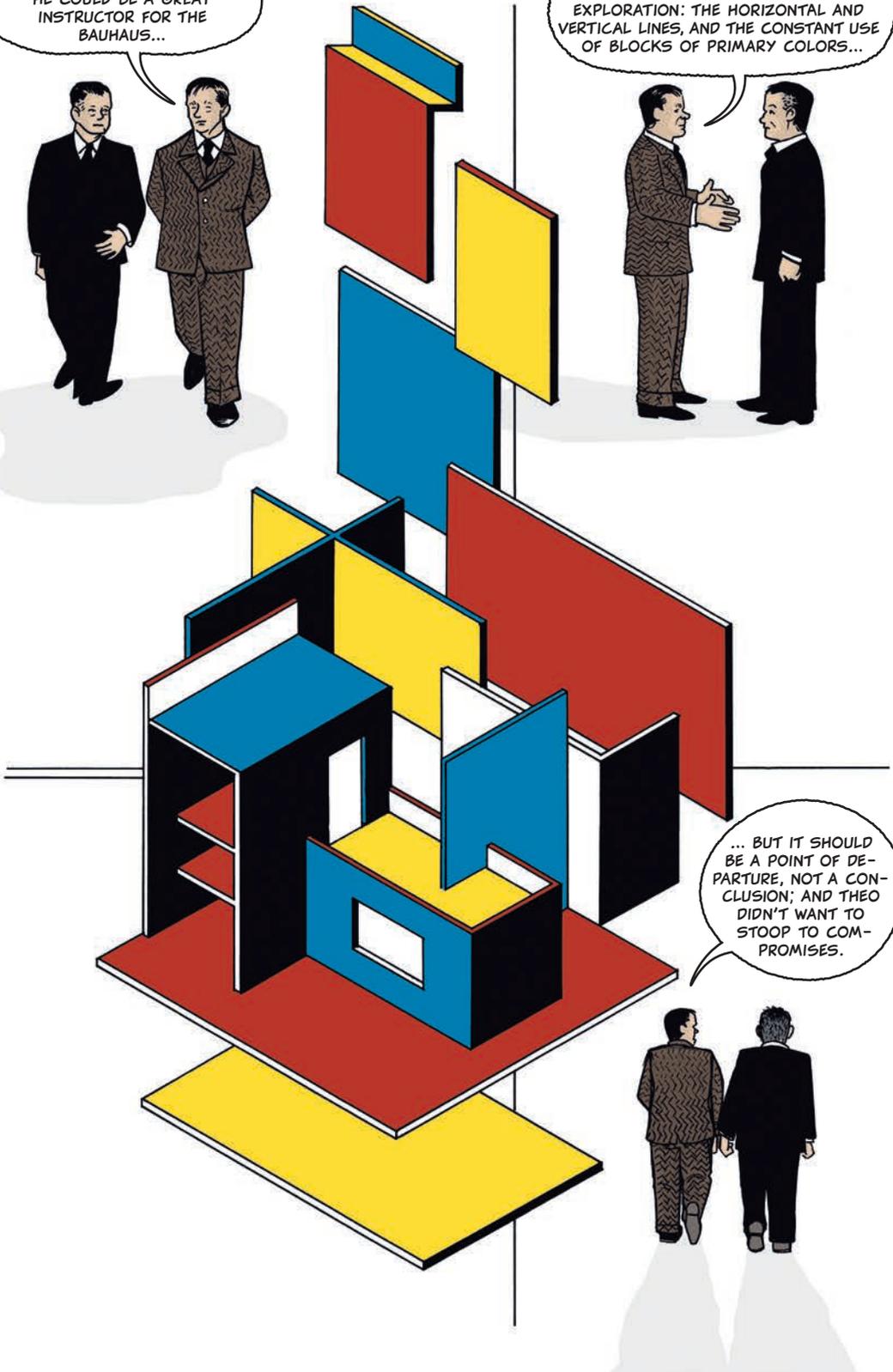


WHY DON'T YOU JUST USE PRIMARY COLORS?

WHEN I MET HIM, I THOUGHT HE COULD BE A GREAT INSTRUCTOR FOR THE BAUHAUS...

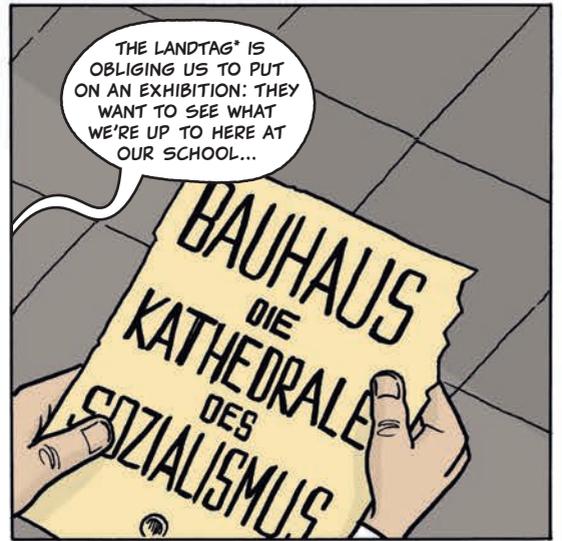


... HIS DE STIJL IS WHAT I FEEL IS CLOSEST TO MY OWN ARTISTIC EXPLORATION: THE HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL LINES, AND THE CONSTANT USE OF BLOCKS OF PRIMARY COLORS...



... BUT IT SHOULD BE A POINT OF DEPARTURE, NOT A CONCLUSION; AND THEO DIDN'T WANT TO STOOP TO COMPROMISES.

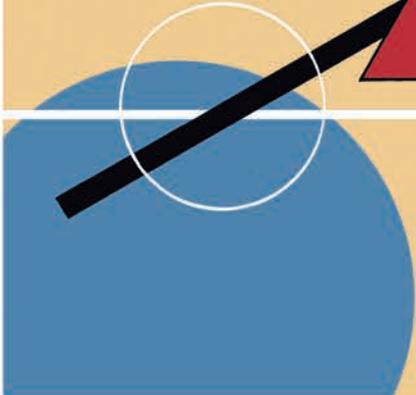
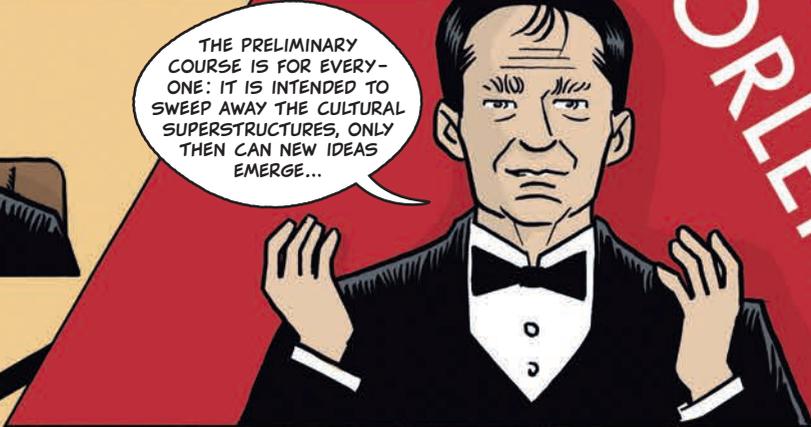
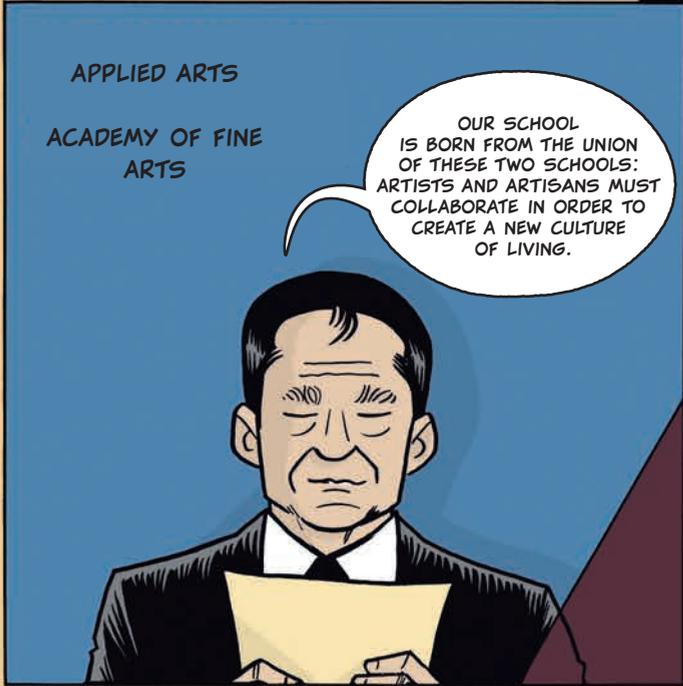


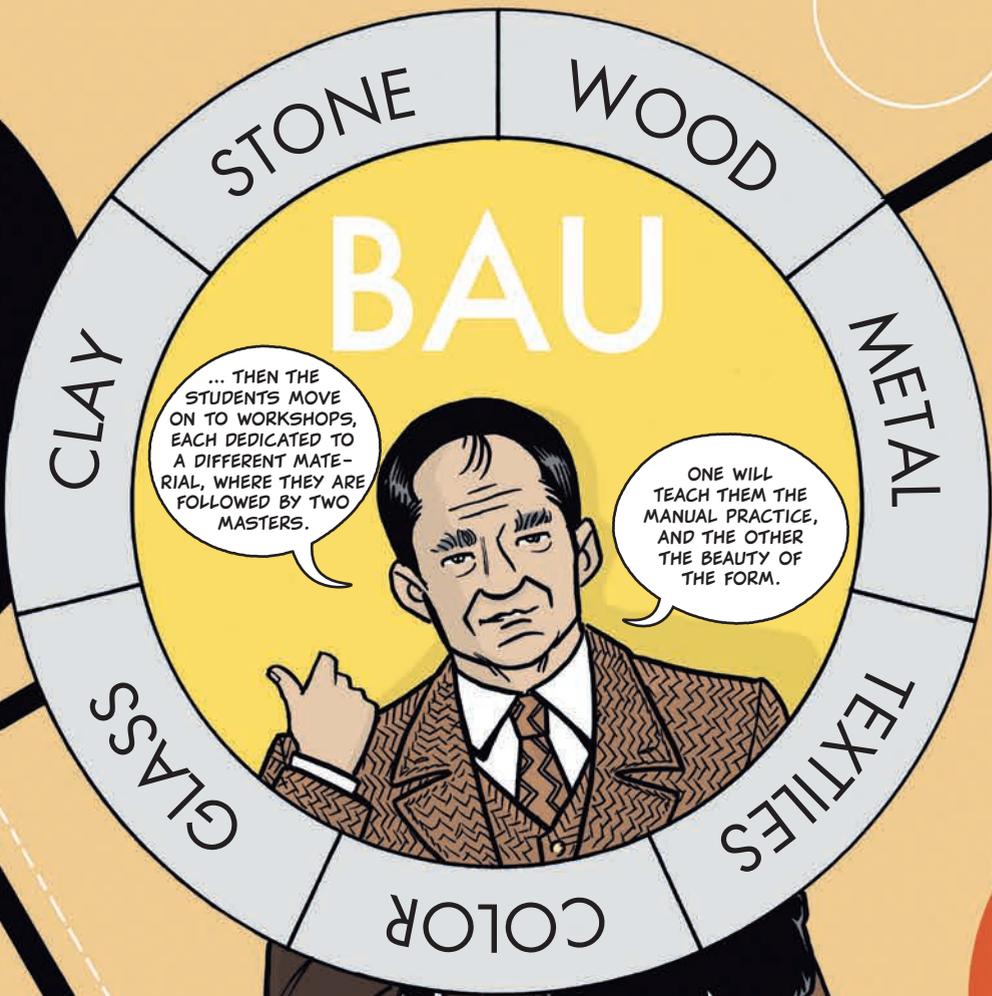


* LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THURINGIA, THE REGION WHERE WEIMAR IS LOCATED



AND WALTER FOUND SUPPORT EVERYWHERE HE WENT...





... THEN THE STUDENTS MOVE ON TO WORKSHOPS, EACH DEDICATED TO A DIFFERENT MATERIAL, WHERE THEY ARE FOLLOWED BY TWO MASTERS.

ONE WILL TEACH THEM THE MANUAL PRACTICE, AND THE OTHER THE BEAUTY OF THE FORM.



ARCHITECTURE COMES AT THE END OF THIS LONG JOURNEY, AND THEN WE WILL REACH THE PEOPLE... THROUGH MASS PRODUCTION OF OUR PROJECTS.





AND SO WE BEGAN OUR PREPARATIONS FOR OUR GREAT EXHIBITION! WE WERE CONSCIOUS OF BREAKING WITH THE PAST...

... A LAMP...

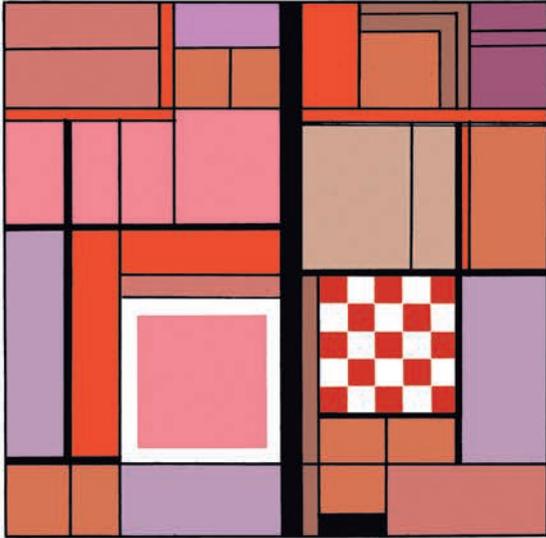
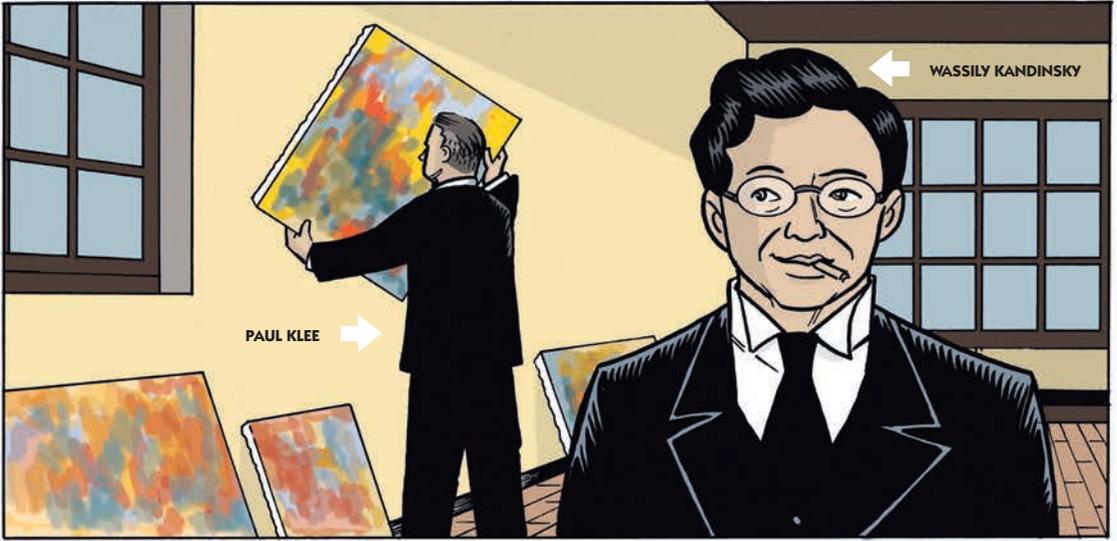


CARL JACOB JUCKER AND
WILHELM WAGENFELD

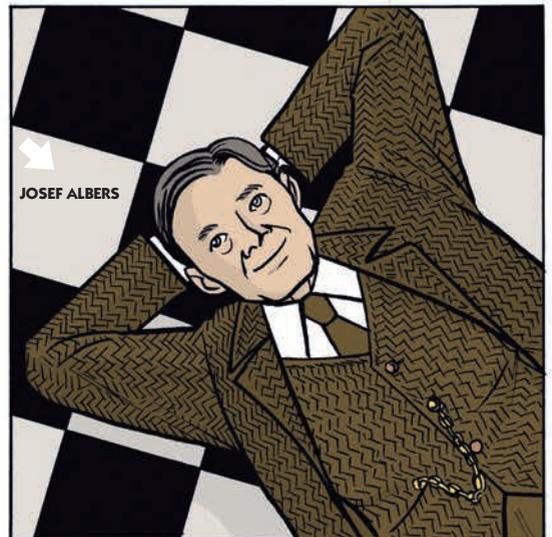


... A WALL HANGING...

ANNELISE FLEISCHMANN



... A STAINED-GLASS WINDOW...



... ALL PRESENTING THEMSELVES WITHOUT EMBELLISHMENT, ACCORDING TO THEIR NATURE, AS WHAT THEY ARE...